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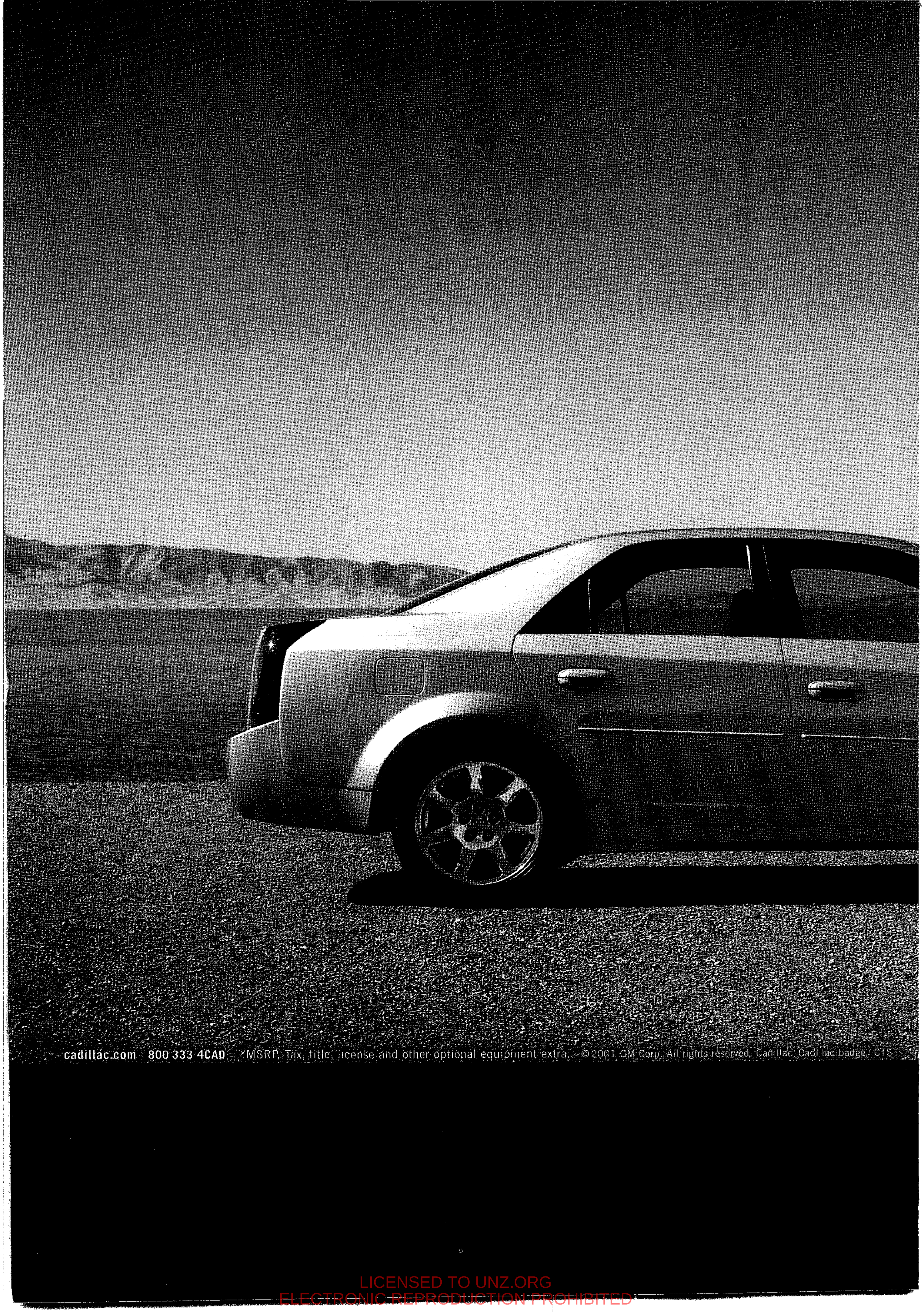

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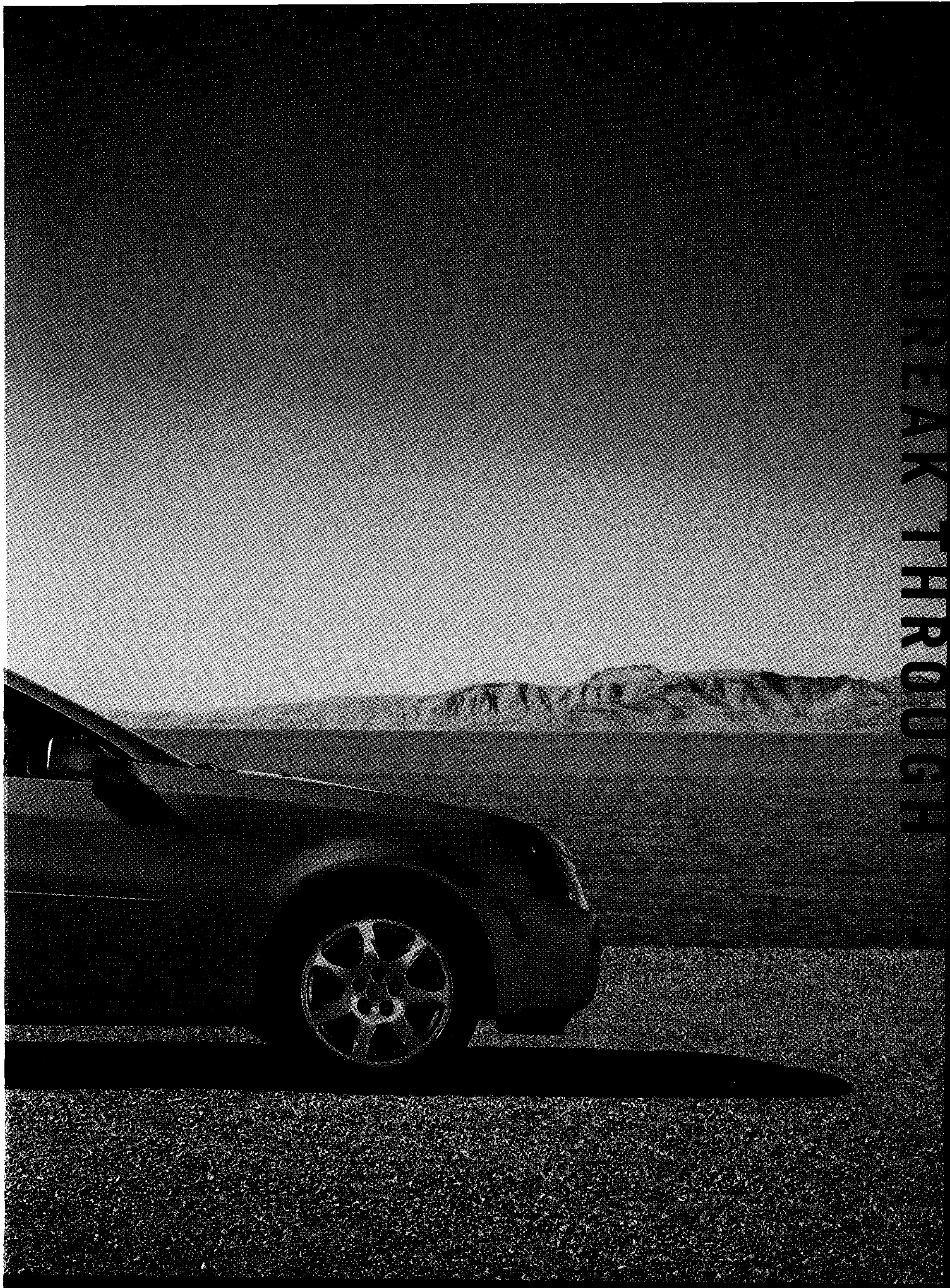

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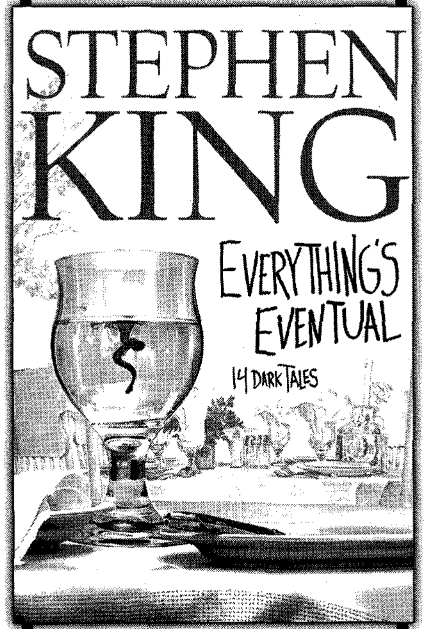

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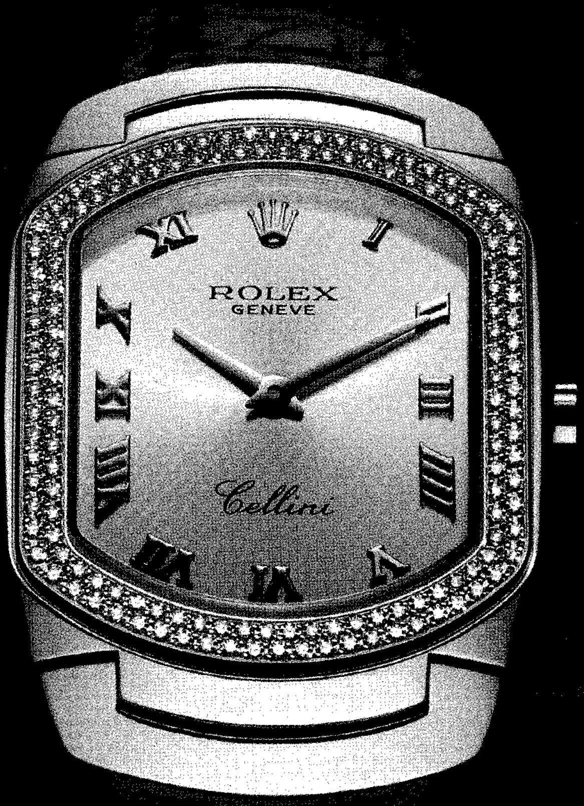

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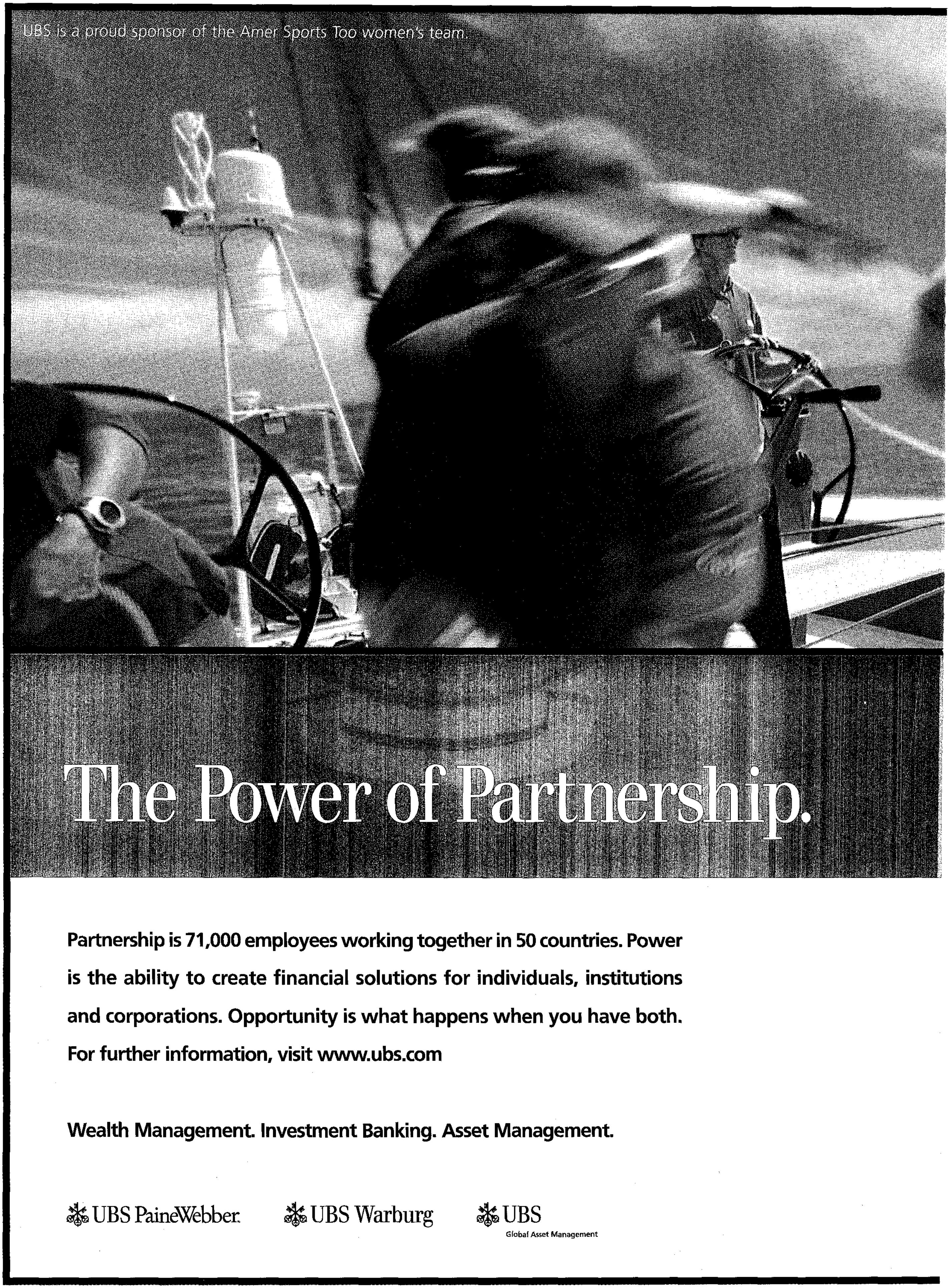

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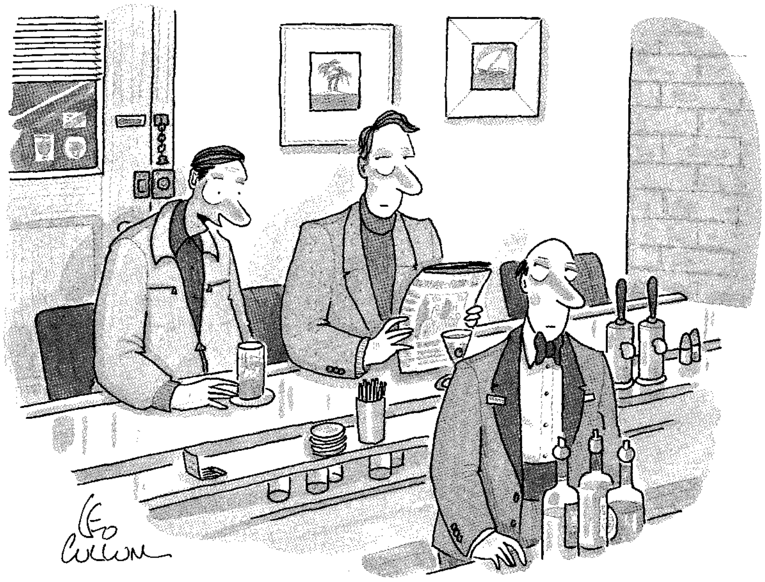

"I don't know anything about global warming, but these ice cubes are melting like crazy."

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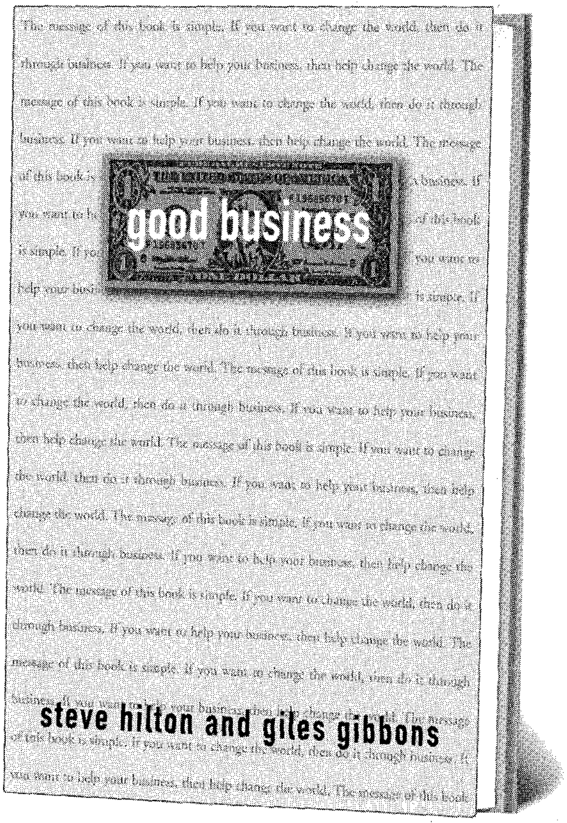
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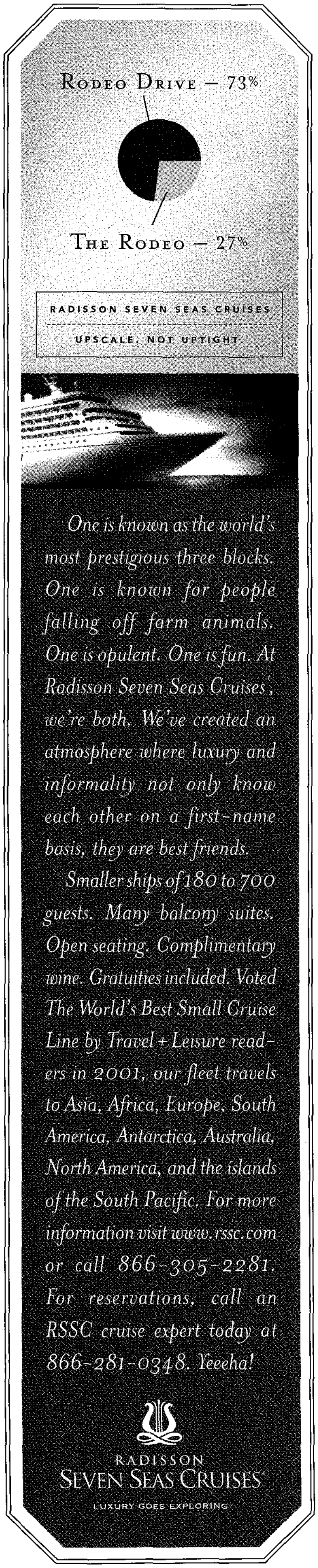
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REMEMBERING THE TOWERS

Paul Goldberger writes that, among those who are planning the future of downtown, there is strong support for restoring portions of the original grid of streets that ran through the World Trade Center site before it was built, in the nineteen-seventies ("Groundwork," May 20th). This is as dispiriting a prospect as it is timid an idea. Blurring the edges of this site, rendering it indistinct from the surrounding community, devalues its meaning and squanders its promise—as if Pearl Harbor were to have evolved into a boatyard. What should always be maintained is the sense of the place that the World Trade Center was—whether we liked it or not. It should be a district, unique and identifiable from its context, where great numbers of people can gather, not under the roof of some transportation hub or in the morbid shadows of the wreckage, as some would have it, but in the bright sunlight so long absent from this site.

Laurence M. Harman
New York City

Goldberger is right to note that the United States has "rarely had the kinds of experiences that create ruins." But constructions in memory of the dead are more common—ironically, the violence of September 11th destroyed a memorial to the victims of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing—and offer lessons that the planners looking at the World Trade Center site could learn from. For example, the acclaimed Oklahoma City memorial owes much of its success to a document that was drawn up laying out its goals about what was to be memorialized in specific terms. New York has not yet done this. Instead, the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation has said only that the memorial should encompass "the victims, the enduring strength of democracy, a celebration of freedom, and a testament to the resurgent power of the city and the nation. . . . [I]t will reflect the free exchange of ideas, goods, and services among diverse peoples that the World Trade Center embodied." This lack of precision and sensitivity will help neither the process of grieving nor that of remembering.

Matthew Boyd Goldie
New York City

I was surprised by Goldberger's observation that the World Trade Center was built without "any community opposition to speak of." The project was bitterly opposed, not only by the "shop owners on Radio Row" but also by a considerable number of New Yorkers who loudly voiced their dismay that the Port Authority would even consider building a vanity project at a time when the city's transit systems were in disrepair, existing public spaces were in disarray, the generally dismal quality of life was draining the city of its middle class and its industry, and office space was overabundant. One can only hope that, this time around, such voices are not forgotten.

Susan Gilman
West Orange, N.J.

That there are many competing voices vying for a stake in decisions about the future of the World Trade Center site is understandable, but the choice of decision-makers, as portrayed in the photograph that accompanied Goldberger's article, is troublesome. Although three of the nine people pictured are women—indicating some social progress—it is still a blatantly monochromatic tableau. Much has been said about how "everything is different" since the tragedies of September 11th, but public policy and decision-making apparently remain what they were before that day: the province of well-connected white men.

Benjamin Tomkins
Emeryville, Calif.

•

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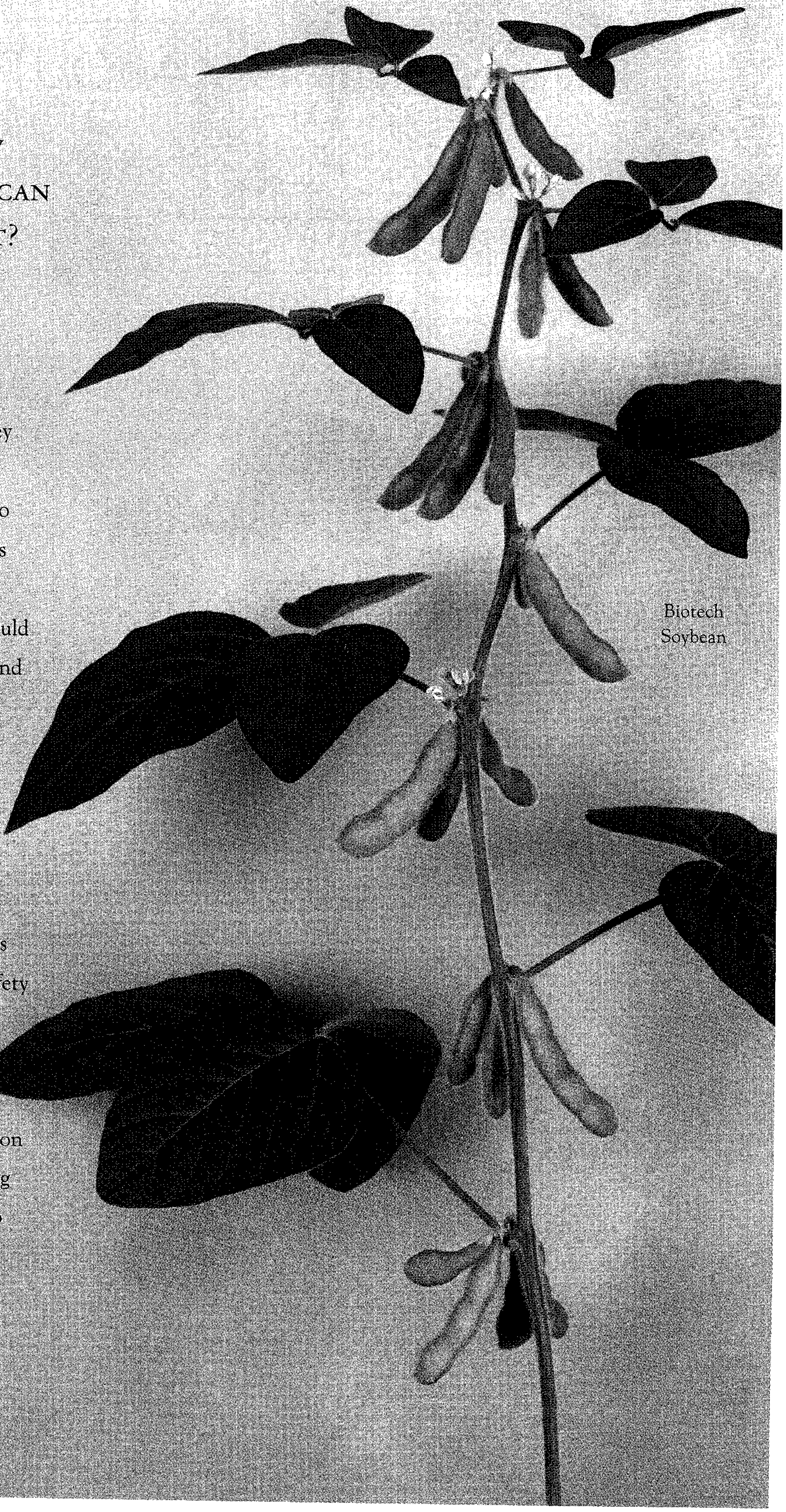

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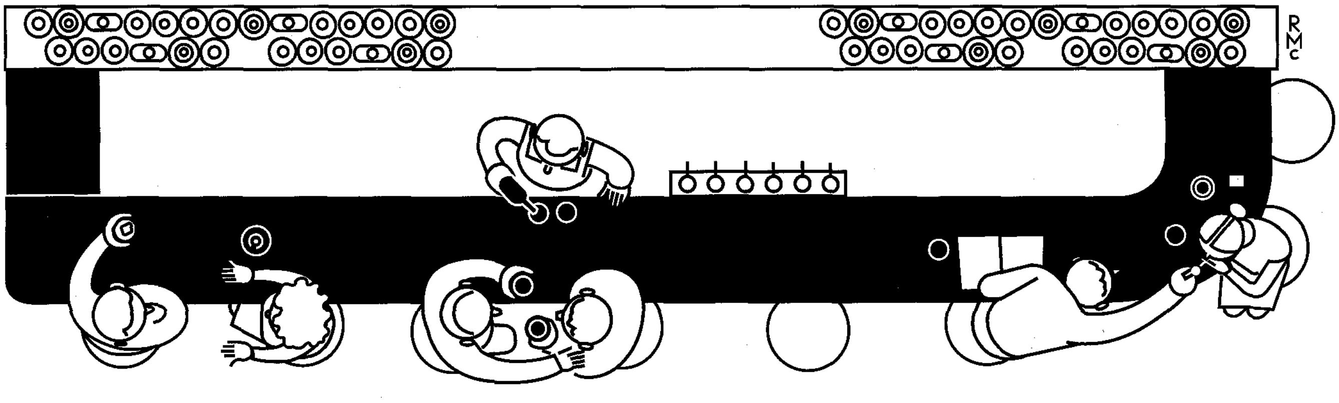

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OPENINGS & PREVIEWS

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DEATH IN VENICE
A stage adaptation of Thomas Mann's 1912 novella, by Robert David McDonald. In previews through the June 8 matinée. Opens that night at 8. (Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 239-6200.)

FREE TO BE YOU AND ME
The Drama Dept.'s new production is based on the popular children's book, album, and television special conceived thirty years ago by Marlo Thomas and Friends. Preview on June 5. Opens June 6 at 8. (Greenwich House Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 239-6200.)

THUNDER KNOCKING ON THE DOOR
Leslie Uggams and Chuck Cooper lead the cast of a new musical, set in rural Alabama in the sixties, written by Keith Glover (book) and Keb' Mo' and Anderson Edwards (music and lyrics). In previews. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 307-4100.)

WHEN WE DEAD AWAKEN
The Century Center's Ibsen series continues with the playwright's 1899 drama about a successful artist and his jilted muse. In previews through June 8. Opens June 9 at 3. (111 E. 15th St. 279-4200.)

OPENED RECENTLY

BOYS AND GIRLS
A gay man moves in with two lesbian friends to offer their son a male role model, in a new play by Tom Donaghy. Gerald Gutierrez is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (The Duke, 229 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. Closes June 9.)

CAPITOL STEPS:
WHEN BUSH COMES TO SHOVE
The Washington, D.C., comedy troupe returns to New York with their latest satirical revue. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

THE CARPETBAGGER'S CHILDREN
Jean Stapleton, Hallie Foote, and Roberta Maxwell portray three daughters of a Union soldier, in Horton Foote's latest play. Michael Wilson is the director. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/10/01.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

THE CRUCIBLE
A masterly revival by Richard Eyre of Arthur Miller's drama about the Salem witch-hunt of 1692, an allegory for the blacklisting delirium of the House Un-American Activities Committee. It stars the expert Laura Linney and Liam Neeson, who is a force of nature. (3/18/02) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. Closes June 9.)

THE ELEPHANT MAN
Thanks to the 1980 David Lynch movie, just about everyone is familiar with the story of Victorian London's John Merrick, the Elephant Man, whose grotesque deformity took him from a cruel life in freak shows to a less cruel life among the medical community and the curious upper crust. Bernard Pomerance's 1979 play came first; today it seems a bit didactic, but it is still very moving, and the issues that it raises—about faith, colonialism, charity, sexuality—are just as thought provoking. Billy Crudup does a wonderful job as Merrick, a role played without the aid of theatrical prosthetics, and so does Rupert Graves as Frederick Treves, the surgeon who takes him in. Sean Mathias is the director. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes June 9.)

ENSEMBLE STUDIO THEATRE
Series C in this year's six-week marathon of one-acts begins June 5 with plays by Peter Maloney, Rogelio Martinez (starring Rosie Perez), Patricia Scanlon, and Graeme Gillis. The marathon continues through June 16. (549 W. 52nd St. 247-4982.)

A FEW STOUT INDIVIDUALS
John Guare's new dark comedy is full of his typical wit and intelligence, but it's also unfocussed and preachy. It uses Ulysses S. Grant's plight at the end of his life—broke, dying of cancer, and addicted to painkillers, he's trying to finish his memoirs so he can leave his family some money—as madcap fodder for examining the mercurial nature of the American memory. Under the direction of Michael Greif, the performances are excellent. (Signature, 555 W. 42nd St. 244-7529. Closes June 9.)

FOOL FOR LOVE
Tim Corcoran's precise, insightful direction is the heart of this revival of Sam Shepard's 1983 play about a misbegotten love. Though there is unfortunately little chemistry between the two leads, the evening's power lies mainly in the monologues, which are superb. (29th Street Rep, 212 W. 29th St. 206-1515.)

FORTUNE'S FOOL
Turgenev's little-known 1848 play, set at a Russian country estate, stars Alan Bates as a down-on-his-luck gentleman living there and Frank Langella as his wealthy, arrogant neighbor. Just as their characters represent the gamut of the negative qualities of the ruling class, Langella and Bates seem to use up all the acting possibilities in the play as they goad and react to each other; it becomes almost unnecessary for anyone else to be present, so completely do they dominate the evening. Directed by Arthur Penn. (4/15/02) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GOAT; OR, WHO IS SYLVIA?
Edward Albee's ninety-minute anecdote about a happily married, successful architect who falls in love with a goat called Sylvia. It takes all of Albee's expertise to tease this joke into an evening; but it allows Mercedes Ruehl some hilarious moments of high dudgeon as she trashes the house and her husband (Bill Pullman) for "cruising livestock." David Esbjornson is the director. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

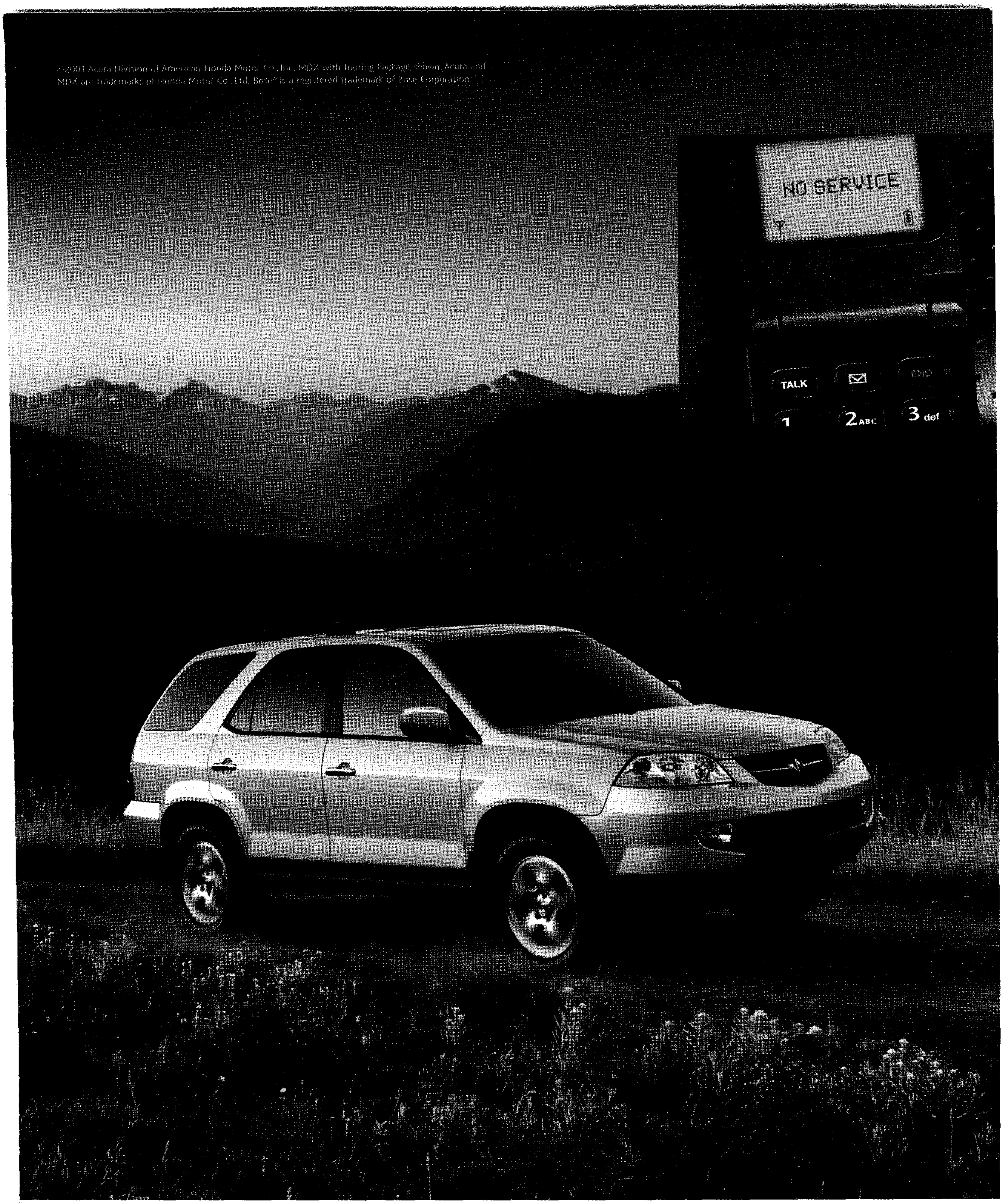
THE GODFADDA WORKOUT
A one-man show written and performed by Seth Isler. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

THE GRADUATE
This pointless production, starring Kathleen Turner as Mrs. Robinson, is endless and full of dead air. There are exactly two pleasures here: Victor Slezak, as Mr. Robinson, and Murphy Guyer, as Benjamin's father; they depict beautifully the anger and anxiety that underlie their postwar poolside bonhomie. (4/15/02) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THE GUYS
A dialogue between a fire captain named Nick, who lost eight of his men on September 11th, and Joan, an editor who helps him prepare their eulogies, written by Anne Nelson, a journalist, and directed by Jim Simpson, the Flea Theatre's artistic director. It's an artful and moving re-creation of the relationships New Yorkers formed as a result of that day—of the way that people "jumped tracks" and suddenly saw into each other's lives. (Nelson herself assisted a fire captain in writing some eulogies, and the play grew out of that experience.) It's an admirable tribute to the men who died and an articulate rendering of the way that one woman dealt with her "beautiful, gleaming, wounded city." (The Flea, 41 White St. 226-2407.)

HOUSE AND GARDEN
A pair of conjoined plays by Alan Ayckbourn, performed simultaneously on two stages. John Tillinger is the director. (6/3/02) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

INTO THE WOODS
Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's 1987 fairy-tale-derived musical weaves together the stories of Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack and the Beanstalk, and Rapunzel. But it isn't so much a rethinking of fairy tales as it is a parable about growing up and finding your place in the community,



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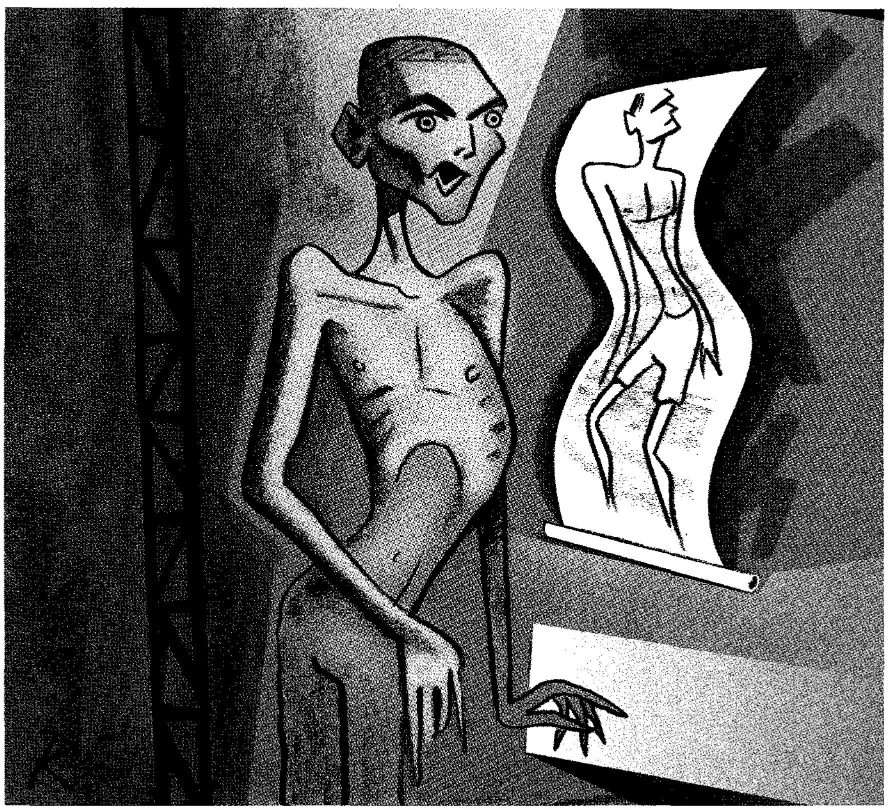
and about learning to live with uncertainty and ambivalence. In the first act, we see wishes coming true, and in the second we see the consequences of those wishes. The archetypal material is treated with suitable directness and simplicity, and yet the show lacks none of the intelligence or emotional honesty we expect from Sondheim. Mr. Lapine is the director. (5/13/02) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

JOE AND BETTY

Murray Mednick's latest play, set in the Catskills in 1951. John Diehl and Annabelle Gurwitch star. (Jose Quintero, 534 W. 42nd St. 244-7529.)

THE LAST SUPPER

The playwright Ed Schmidt, who got himself ordained as a minister in the Universal Life Church and installed pews in the kitchen of his own home, cooks and serves dinner for an audience of twelve ("honest-to-God dinner theatre") while subjecting them to a ranting meditation on what really went down at the Last Supper. Given Schmidt's doubts about his religion (he's a lapsed Catholic), his show, which brings to mind both Julia Child and Spalding Gray, is a surprisingly spirited attempt at making the Host palatable to contemporary audiences. (410 16th St., Brooklyn. 718-499-7758.)



Billy Crudup, in Bernard Pomerance's "The Elephant Man," at the Royale.

ROBERT RISKO

THE MAN WHO HAD ALL THE LUCK

In this beautifully cast production of Arthur Miller's 1944 play, the terrific actors, under the direction of Scott Ellis, illuminate the drama as fully as it is possible to do. A young auto mechanic named David Beeves (Chris O'Donnell) can't accept his good fortune in life, because he doesn't think he's done anything to deserve it. The play asks whether what happens to us is the result of character or luck, and whether character itself is a matter of luck, but it doesn't try to answer the question, which is why, after fifty-eight years, the work still has plenty of life in it. (5/13/02) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 719-1300.)

METAMORPHOSES

Ovid's tales, loosely adapted and directed by Mary Zimmerman, who has had the ingenious idea of staging the caprice of the gods in a swimming pool. The production is fun and full of wonder, but it illustrates rather than dramatizes psychic struggle. The show's gimmick, the pool, turns out to be its metaphor—refreshing and shallow. (3/18/02) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

MORNING'S AT SEVEN

The question all of the characters in this revival of Paul Osborne's 1939 back-porch drama ask one way or another is: What am I going to do with my life? It's bland stuff, sort of Chekhov light, but the pleasing all-star cast puts this rickety workhorse through its paces. Directed by Daniel Sullivan. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200. Closes June 16.)

NEW YORK STORIES IN BLACK AND WHITE

An evening of two-character one-acts dealing with race relations: "Breakdown," by Bill Bozzone; "In the Garden at St. Luke's," by Stan Lachow; and "The Spelling Bee," by Philip Vassallo. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 155 Bank St. 206-1515.)

OKLAHOMA!

There are stupendous pleasures in the Royal National Theatre's version of Rodgers and Hammerstein's 1943 American classic. Many of them are due to the high-spirited, humorous choreography of Susan Stroman, and to Anthony Ward's picturesque set. But technique, which can make a show work, is not enough to make it wonderful. (4/1/02) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

ONE SHOT, ONE KILL

Sergeant Harris (Robert Montano), an élite sniper who has just finished a successful covert mission, returns to the Marine base at Quantico, where he clashes with his commanding officer, Major Royce (Michael Cullen), himself a legendary marksman of the Vietnam era. (The Sergeant is requesting a separation from the Corps, and the Major needs to know why.) Richard Vetere's dialogue hurtles forward—bracing, revealing, sometimes funny, frequently sobering—as the men bristle and bond, confide in and con each other. At the heart of the drama is an examination of the nature of a warrior, and it's timely as hell. Andrea Maulella, as the Sergeant's wife, completes the cast and complicates the emotions. The director, Joe Brancato, smartly marshals his actors and the theatrical elements of set, lights, and sound to riveting effect. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes June 23.)

PIGTOWN

A charming, vivacious production of a far less successful script about life in Limerick throughout the twentieth century. Under Charlotte Moore's brilliant direction, the splendid cast makes the most of it. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes June 9.)

PRIVATE LIVES

In Noël Coward's comedy of bad manners, two wonderful actors, Alan Rickman and Lindsay Duncan, play the embattled exes Elyot and Amanda—dandies of detachment who jilt their new spouses and run away together to a Parisian love nest. Howard Davies's radical notion is to play Elyot and Amanda's physical passion for real, rather than opting for the standard notional sexual allure. This allows him to capitalize on the wonderful chemistry between Rickman and Duncan, but it also throws the comedy weirdly off kilter. (5/6/02) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

QED

Peter Parnell's play, starring Alan Alda as the physicist Richard Feynman, buzzes with life. Set in 1986, it takes us through an afternoon and evening in Feynman's office at Caltech, where he talks about such subjects as photons, drumming, the Manhattan Project, cancer, and "South Pacific." Alda's performance is one of utter charm. Sundays and Mondays only. (11/26/01) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes June 10.)

REBEL WITHOUT A PAUSE: UNRESTRAINED REFLECTIONS ON SEPTEMBER 11TH

The monologuist known as Reno offers her thoughts on New York in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attacks. (The Zipper, 336 W. 37th St. 239-6200.)

RICKY JAY: ON THE STEM

The master magician's tribute to the flimflammery and weird entertainments that have cropped up over the years along the length of Broadway, "the stem that winds the watch" of New York City. Working six hundred and forty-two steps (he counted them) from the flea museum that used to be in Times Square, Jay re-creates such flea feats as Ophelia's death and Samson's destruction of the Temple of the Philistines. There are also card tricks that amaze and astonish, all performed with a charming smile by the president of the international brotherhood of snake-oil salesmen. Prepare to be happily hornswoggled. (Note: Jay has decreed that no one under sixteen will be admitted to his show.) Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 246-4422.)

ROOM

Classic Stage Company wraps up the season with a solo performance piece based on the writings of Virginia Woolf. (136 E. 13th St. 677-4210, ext. 2. Closes June 16.)

SELF-DEFENSE; OR, DEATH OF SOME SALESMEN

Carson Kreitzer's drama is based on the true story of a Florida prostitute and serial killer. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., at Spring St. 647-0202. Closes June 15.)

SMELLING A RAT

A pointless play by Mike Leigh involving a man ostensibly on vacation, an employee he asks to check on his empty house, the man's son, and a couple of women, who all end up in the man's bedroom one night, to much confusion. This production features several fine comic performances, but it's a fairly banal script with too much talk for farce and too many slammed doors for straight comedy. (Mr. Leigh seems to want to say something about unequal power and the equal perils of indiscretion and silence.) Nonetheless, given the amount of time most of the cast spends hiding in closets, they do very well. Perhaps the best performance comes from Michelle Williams; she's left behind the teenage angst of "Dawson's Creek" for this poignantly funny portrayal of a babbling idiot worthy of Carole Lombard. Directed by Scott Elliott. (Samuel Beckett, 410 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

SURVIVING GRACE

A play by Trish Vradenburg, about a fraught mother-and-daughter relationship. Jack Hofsiss directs. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-7171.)

SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS

At first glance, this new musical, adapted from the excellent Clifford Odets–Ernest Lehman movie

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(1957) by a high-powered artistic team headed by the director Nicholas Hytner, seems to have got it right. Unfortunately, the wit of John Guare's book is not sustained in Marvin Hamlisch's soft, undistinguished score and Craig Carnelia's flat lyrics. (3/25/02) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

THIS THING OF DARKNESS
The Atlantic Theatre Company wraps up the season with a drama written by Craig Lucas and David Schulner. (Reviewed in this issue.) (336 W. 20th St. 239-6200.)

THOROUGHLY MODERN MILLIE
A 1967 Hollywood version of the Roaring Twenties—which starred Julie Andrews as an ingenue flapper who comes to New York City, finds true love, and helps break up a Chinese-run white-slavery ring—reimagined for the stage in 2002. Just like the movie, it's supposed to be all madcap Jazz Age fizziness, but the harder the cast sings and dances, the flatter the enterprise falls. The colors seem garish rather than gay, the manic energy feels forced at gunpoint, and the only thing you recall about Sutton Foster's Millie after you leave the theatre is her huge white teeth and bouncy black bob. Call it thoroughly boring, shrilly. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

TOPDOG/UNDERDOG
The Public Theatre's production of Suzan-Lori Parks's play has moved to Broadway, starring Jeffrey Wright and Mos Def. George C. Wolfe is the director. (Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

21 DOG YEARS: DOING TIME@AMAZON.COM
Michael Daisey spent three years at Amazon during its headiest, do-no-wrong period. And now he's telling all. Mr. Daisey is a charismatic performer, and most of his show has the insightful hostility of the best comedy. Though the audience doesn't learn anything new about the dot-com bubble and its discontents, it's fun to get the view from the inside. Amazon's headquarters are referred to as "Lex Luthor's frat house on the hill," for example—how can we think of it as anything else now? Toward the end, though, the show drags, when Mr. Daisey justifies his departure from Amazon with a narcissistic, self-righteous explanation of what he came to see as selling out. But all in all it's a clever, sprightly look behind the hype. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 239-6200.)

VIENNA: LUSTHAUS (REVISITED)
In this splendid revival of Martha Clarke's 1986 dance-theatre piece, inspired by the psychosexual steaminess of fin-de-siècle Vienna, a handsome troupe of dancers, sometimes clothed in the style of characters in a Schnitzler play, sometimes unclothed in the style of figures in a Schiele painting, enact various states of alienation and desire in a gauzy atmosphere charged with premonitions of the Second World War. The actors intone Charles L. Mee's cryptic scraps of monologue, taken in part from the notebooks of Freud; the musicians play plangent scraps of music composed by Richard Peaslee. Inexorably, the whole thing gets to you like a beautiful, bad dream. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 239-6200.)

DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
June 5 at 8: "Interplay," "A Suite of Dances," "Antique Epigraphs," and "I'm Old Fashioned." ♦ June 6 at 8: "La Stravaganza," "A Suite of Dances," "Antique Epigraphs," and "Cortège Hongrois." ♦ June 7 at 8: "Them Twos," "La Stravaganza," and "Agon." ♦ June 8 at 2: "Divertimento No. 15," "Agon," and "Who Cares?" ♦ June 8 at 8: "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "La Stravaganza," and "Agon." ♦ June 9 at 3: "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Antique Epigraphs," a new ballet by Melissa Barak, and "Cortège Hongrois." ♦ June 11 at 7:30: "Agon," "La Sonnambula," and "Who Cares?" (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through June 30.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
June 5 at 2 and 8 and June 6 at 8: "La Fille Mal Gardée." ♦ June 7 at 8: "Theme and Variations," "Rose Adagio," "Nutcracker Pas de Deux," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," and "Sleeping Beauty, Act III." ♦ June 8 at 2: "Theme and Variations," "Nutcracker Pas de Deux," "Tchaikovsky Pas de Deux," "White Swan Pas de Deux," and "Sleeping Beauty, Act III." ♦ June 8 and June 10 at 8: "The Dream" and "Symphony in C." ♦ June 11 at 8: "The Merry Widow." (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000. Through July 6.)

"STREB GO!: ACTION HEROES!"
The choreographer Elizabeth Streb and her eight-member troupe of "pop-action" dancers mix daredevil deeds with minimalist clarity. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. June 4-7 at 8, June 8 at 2 and 8, and June 9 at 2 and 7:30. Through June 16.)

NOCHE FLAMENCA
The flamenco group, founded by the husband-and-wife team of Martin Santangelo and Soledad Barrio, returns for its summer season. (New Victory, 209 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. June 6-7 at 7, June 8 at 2 and 7, and June 9 at noon and 5. Through June 16.)

"WET BLUE & FRIENDS"
The impish physical comedienne and dancer Clare Byrne understands that the best solos are often ones where a lone performer is at odds with being alone. In this piece, Byrne, as Wet Blue, passes time in a public bathroom as various no-goodniks wander through and Aretha Franklin sings between the flushings. Her Chaplinesque character dreams "of having had love and lost it, and of trying to find it again," she says. "Having love is humdrum, but waiting for it can be delicious." Byrne makes the premise plausible, her sexiness and soulfulness delivered so slyly they seem like happy accidents. (Dixon Place, 309 E. 26th St., at Second Ave. 532-1546. June 6-8 at 8.)

FRED DARSOW DANCE
Darsow's show starts in typical flamenco fashion—with festive, speedy numbers that shake the flowers from the dancers' hair. So, we expect this to be followed by a plunge into darkness: the singer wailing loudly and the dancers (here, La Meira and a fiery, firm Nelida Tirado) pulling pain from the floorboards up through their stiffening torsos. Instead, we get Brian Eno's "Music for Airports" and a smooth modern dance in which the declarative arms and sudden punctuated stops of a moment ago have been reduced to traces. Darsow has been making hybrids for the last ten years. "It's a slow evolution," he says. For this program, he offers Galápagos Islands of flamenco, with all manner of modern-dance inflections, all within a few minutes—or body parts—of each other. (The Flea, 41 White St. 226-2407. June 6-9 at 9:30. Through June 16.)

Ellen Lauren, as Virginia Woolf, in "Room," at Classic Stage Company.

N. ASCENCIOS

"FOOD FOR THOUGHT"
Three supporters of Danspace, Cathy Zimmerman, Amanda Loulaki, and Anna Glass, curate an evening apiece. Zimmerman presents dances for young adults; Loulaki offers a "new adrenaline rush," with works by Mark DeChiazza, Kristen Hollinsworth, and Osmany Tellez, among others; and Glass puts together a program of solos, including pieces by Homer Avila, Rachel Shao-Lan Blum, and Maia Sage Ermanson. (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. June 7-9 at 8:30. Tickets are half-price for patrons who bring two canned-food items.)

DOUG VARONE
The choreographer performs four solos: "Nocturne," "On the Field of Destiny," "After You've Gone," and "The Drawing Lesson." (Tisch School of the Arts, 111 Second Ave., at 6th St. 279-3344. June 6 at 8.)

CHAMBER DANCE PROJECT
The choreographer Diane Coburn Bruning offers new works with an ad-hoc cast of ballet stars such as Peter Boal (of the City Ballet), Griff Braun (formerly of A.B.T.), and Christine Winkler (of the Atlanta Ballet). (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. June 6 at 7:30 and June 7 at 8.)

NIGHT LIFE
CONCERTS

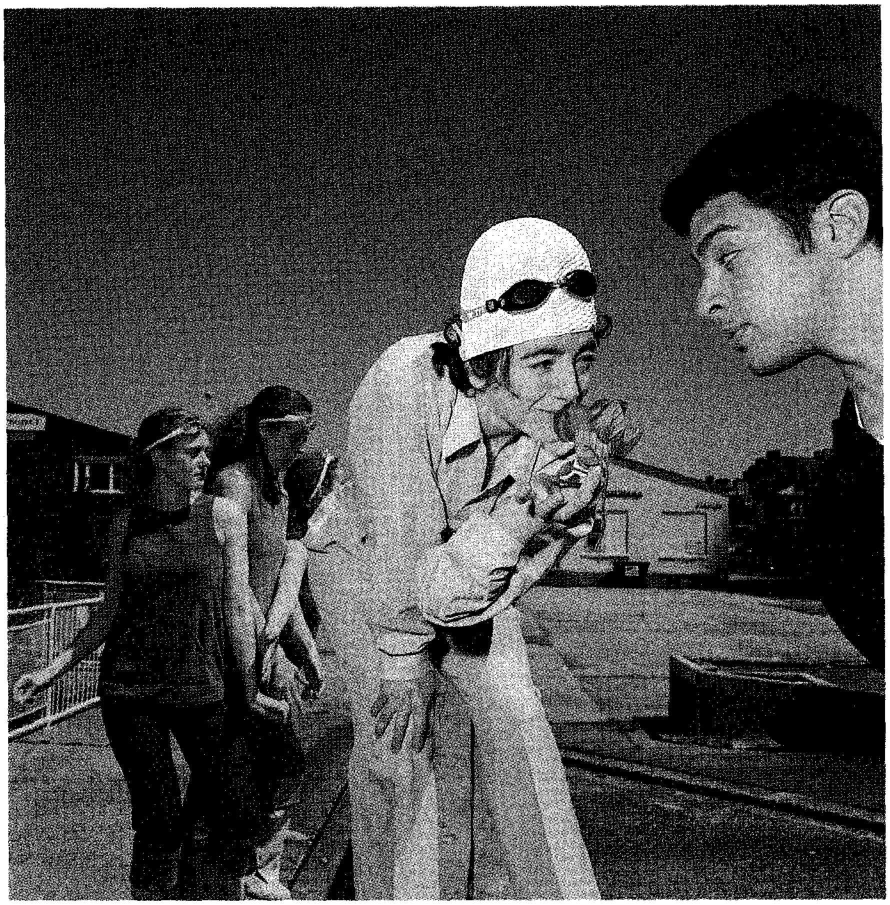
VISION FESTIVAL
The festival of left-of-mainstream music and dance closes out its run. Highlights of the four or five sets each evening include the following: Josh Roseman, Peter Apfelbaum, JT Lewis, Mark Dresser, and Ben Monder together on June 5 (CBGB's Lounge, 313 Bowery, at Bleecker St.); a performance by the dancer Christine Coppolla and the violinist Mat Maneri on June 6; more dance with Patricia Nicholson accompanied by the reed player Joseph Jarman and Cooper Moore on homemade instruments on June 7; and the saxophonist Charles Gayle assisting the dancers Miriam Parker and Michael Getman on June 8 (The Center, 268 Mulberry St.). (For more information, visit www.visionfestival.org.)

NORAH JONES
This up-and-coming pianist and singer certainly has the voice and the looks, but a gripping stage presence is still in the works. She tends to cling too closely to the mood of her surprise-hit début album, "Come Away with Me," a low-key affair that borders on the somnolent. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. June 6-7 at 8.)

"MYSTERIO SIMPATICO"
The guitarist Bill Frisell scored this ninety-minute multimedia production, which he created alongside the cartoonist Jim Woodring. The trumpeter Ron Miles and the violinist Jenny Scheinman accompany Frisell and projections of Woodring's sketches. (St. Ann's Warehouse, 38 Water St., Brooklyn. 718-858-2424.)

ANDRE THIERRY AND ZYDECO MAGIC
A night of hot washboards and accordions. Chank-a-chank, as they say. (La Belle Époque, 827 Broadway, at 13th St. For more information, call 685-7597. June 9 at 7:30.)

ALANIS MORISSETTE
This former child actress became the angry prototype for jilted young women everywhere thanks to



"Wet Blue & Friends," choreographed by Clare Byrne (with rose), at Dixon Place.

BRIAN FINKE

her 1995 breakout single, "You Oughta Know." Her rage may have diminished since then, but her latest work remains full of unsolicited confessions. (Jones Beach Theatre. 307-7171. June 9 at 8.)

CLUBS

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (533-2111)—June 5-6: Australia's **Silverchair** continues on its quest to move beyond its status as grunge-lite neophytes. June 10-11: The velvet-voiced, post-folk English singer **Beth Orton** returns after a two-year absence with songs from her new album, "Daybreaker." With her independent-minded compatriot, the singer **James Yorkston.**

BROWNIES
169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (420-8392)—June 5: The Brooklyn threesome **Jerkwater** offers solidly rhythmic pop augmented by occasional fancy stylings on a hollow-body electric guitar. June 7: **Folksongs for the Afterlife,** an outfit that successfully mixes old-time folk music with languorous electronic beats, and the **Mink Lungs,** an eclectic Brooklyn band known for its riotous live performances.

IRVING PLAZA
17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—June 5: The nineties-neo-ska-boom survivor **Goldfinger** carries on its punky interpretation of all things checkered and two-toned. June 6: A fifteen-year veteran of James Brown's legendary JBs and a pivotal member of the Parliament/Funkadelic empire, the saxophonist **Maceo Parker** can still thrill. June 7: **Nashville Pussy** flies the flag of depravity with a libidinous repertoire of stripped-down, high-volume rock and roll deliriously devoid of any finesse.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (539-8777)—June 6: The Minneapolis rocker **Mark Mallman.**

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—June 6: **Gary Lucas** offers his take on mid-twentieth-century Chinese pop during the early set. Later that night Lucas breaks out his power trio Gods and Monsters and is joined by **Elli Medeiros,** the former vocalist of the French punk band the Stinky Toys.

MERCURY LOUNGE
217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—June 8: When indie-rock heroes Pavement disintegrated about two years ago, their secondary songwriter Scott Kannberg formed **Preston School of Industry.** The band is essentially a more earnest Pavement, without the versatile and knowing vocals of the original's matinée-idol front man, Stephen Malkmus. The formula was received with respect (and a quick record deal) but little enthusiasm: on their first swing through New York, last fall, Preston School headlined the much larger Bowery Ballroom but was outdrawn by the opening act. June 9: The Austin-based musician **Alejandro Escovedo** played punk in the seventies and has since carved out a critically acclaimed career as a singer-songwriter with a penchant for world-weary homilies. His latest album, "By the Hand of the Father," features lyrics written by Mexican-American playwrights.

NORTHSIX
66 N. 6th St., Williamsburg (718-599-5103)—June 8: The **Rye Coalition,** a New Jersey band devoted to the harder side of rock and roll, is known for their energetically crushing live shows, led by manic singer Ralph Cuseglio. June 9: **Lightning Bolt,** consisting of just a bass guitar and a drum kit, produces a ringing noise attack. At a recent show, fans waiting out the usual between-acts lull were jolted from their reverie by the furious cacophony of the band, which had quietly set up its equipment behind the audience.

TONIC
107 Norfolk St. (358-7503)—June 7: **Jewlia Eisenberg** drops by from the left coast with her new a-cappella songs, which are based on the diaries and letters of the influential cultural critic Walter Benjamin and the Bolshevik revolutionary Asja Lacis, who had a tortured relationship. Far from dry (who would think that the musings of these two didactic souls would be anything but?), the songs are often hilarious and touching, and they run the gamut from stridently dissonant to sweet and soulful.

WARSAW
261 Driggs Ave., Brooklyn (718-387-5252)—June 7: **Kaiju Big Battel,** an oddly entertaining hybrid of professional wrestling, Japanese monster movies, and art-school high jinks, rolls into town. The Boston-based troupe, which began some seven years ago at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, stages high-concept spectacles—the soup fights the sandwich, for example (which will reign supreme at the lunch table?)—that are rooted in low-tech productions: these local shows sport some twenty monsters and alien characters along with a giant crushable cityscape. The musical guest is **Enon,** a madcap outfit that bridges the gap between clever indie rock and experimental noise.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

ALGONQUIN HOTEL
59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Through June 29: The vocalist **Mary Cleere Haran,** who can capture a bygone era in song and anecdote with exceptional style, explores the more obscure works of Rodgers and Hart. Dining.

BLUE NOTE
131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through June 9: The remarkably versatile singer-pianist **Diane Schuur,** who is equally at home with forties standards, R. & B. wails, and sultry torch songs.

CARLYLE HOTEL
Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, through June 29, the magisterially puckish **Bobby Short.** If performing in the same room for more than thirty years is getting Short down, it doesn't show. Singing and playing piano as if his reputation were still on the line and conducting his mini big band with a glee bordering on giddiness, he remains the master of exuberant cabaret.

FEINSTEIN'S AT THE REGENCY
540 Park Ave., at 61st St. (339-4095)—Through June 22: The **John Pizzarelli** trio, with special guests **Bucky Pizzarelli** and **Jessica Molaskey.** The family that swings together stays together. Bucky, the dean of mainstream guitar, joins the trio led by John, Jr., a guitarist, singer, composer, and bandleader with a passion for the songs of the Tin Pan Alley and swing eras. John's brother Martin plays bass, alongside the pianist Ray Kennedy. Jessica Molaskey, John, Jr.,'s wife, adds her honeyed voice to the proceedings—her charming new CD, "Pentimento," proves that she's a winning addition to the musical clan.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (582-2121)—Through June 9: The **Pharoah Sanders** quartet. With soulful balladeering now tempering his titanic eruptions, Sanders has become the complete saxophonist. It's been quite an evolution for the roaring iconoclast who once made even late-period Coltrane sound reserved; these days Sanders's colossal tone and naked expressivity are crucial elements in his openhearted embrace of the audience. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.**

JAZZ GALLERY
290 Hudson St., at Spring St. (242-1063)—June 7-8: Last year's "Panoptic Modes," a vital quartet recording by the pianist **Vijay Iyer,** gave notice that both the pianist and his saxophonist, **Rudresh Mahanthappa,** are new-jazz provocateurs with fresh ideas aplenty.

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—June 6-8: As the producer of the 2001 album "Memphis Blood," the guitarist **Vernon Reid** brought his fellow fretman **James (Blood) Ulmer** way back to his roots, exploring blues classics by Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters, and others at Sun Studios, in Memphis. A

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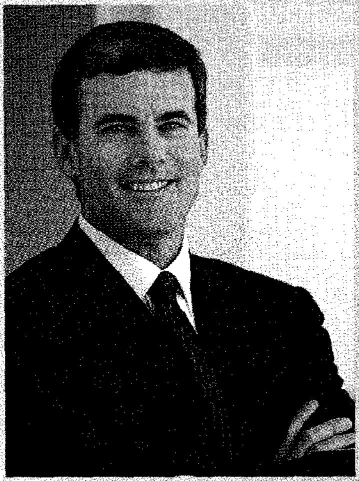

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Northern reunion between these two guitarists will make explicit the affinities between Robert Johnson, Jimi Hendrix, and Ulmer's old cohort Ornette Coleman. Dining.

SMOKE
2751 Broadway, between 105th and 106th Sts. (864-6662)—June 7-8: The **Renee Rosnes** quartet. Balancing a healthy respect for the jazz tradition—which held her in good stead as the pianist for the Carnegie Hall Jazz Orchestra—and a far-sighted streak that finds her delving into world music, Rosnes has kept expectant listeners on their toes.

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through June 9: As other young, imaginative pianists began to crowd the scene, the buzz on this defiantly eccentric pianist evaporated, but don't count **Jacky Terrasson** out quite yet. With new rhythm-mates onboard—the bassist **Sean Smith** and **Al Foster**, the veteran drummer whose presence guarantees airtight swing—Terrasson should feel free to confidently display the sleight-of-hand that gained him attention nearly a decade ago. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—**"Adrian: American Glamour,"** at the Costume Institute. Through Aug. 18. ♦ The venerable husband-and-wife team of Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen has installed four recent sculptures in the roof garden. The best is a twenty-three-foot-tall garden spade, its jaunty red blade lodged in the patch of grass that sprouts from its pedestal. It looks as if an Olympian landscaper has just taken a lunch break, and it's perfectly suited to the panoramic view of Central Park. Less satisfying is a baroque white form atop a black rectilinear base. Though based on a Man Ray photograph of Mies van der Rohe's pocket square, it looks more like a crumpled sheet of paper or a gawky rendition of a cloud. Through late fall. ♦ **"Tapestry in the Renaissance: Art and Magnificence."** The aptly titled show features forty-one sumptuous examples of magnificence woven between 1420 and 1560, including "The Unicorn Defends Itself," from the Met's own Cloisters, along with three panels from the ten-part "Acts of the Apostles," designed by Raphael for the Sistine Chapel, and all four sections of the "Alba Passion" cycle, shown together here for the first time since 1877. Through June 19. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—The midtown museum has closed, through 2005. The museum's temporary home in Long Island City opens on June 29.

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—**"Rachel Whiteread: Transient Spaces."** Through June 22. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 9 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 9 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—Selections from the permanent collection are on display. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6; Fridays, 1 to 9.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—**"Star Wars: The Magic of Myth"** adds many artifacts from the original trilogy (and first prequel) to a well-attended travelling exhibition that opened at D.C.'s National Air and Space Museum in 1997. Through July 7. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (849-8300)—The ambitious if scattershot **"Skin: Surface, Substance and Design"** makes a case for skin-deep design, showcasing objects from the past five years which traffic in ideas about membrane and surface. Fashion and furniture are well represented (there's even a blue nylon windbreaker that doubles as an inflatable chair), but the curator, Ellen Lupton, casts a wide net, presenting contributions from disciplines as diverse as biotechnology (a fascinating sampling of artificial skin and cartilage) and filmmaking (clips of movies from "Frankenstein" to "Aliens"). Sometimes this pluralism is stretched too thin, as with a visually tepid shelf of "cosmeceuticals," skin-care products packaged to resemble medical supplies. Through Sept. 15. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

FRICK COLLECTION
1 E. 70th St. (288-0700)—An exhibition of some seventy drawings aims to ratchet up our estimation of Jean-Baptiste Greuze, the eighteenth-century French master (1725-1805) who was a favorite of Diderot's and Catherine the Great's. Greuze's virtuosity is faintly generic, but nobody could fault him for lack of skill or energy. The show teems with whiplash figure studies, incisive portraits, and adorably over-the-top melodramas like "The Beloved Mother," which shows a Donna Reed of the ancien régime nearly disappearing under her clambering progeny. A study for the latter looks so voluptuous that Diderot wondered if she wasn't perhaps experiencing an altogether different kind of marital bliss. "If women pass quickly by this work," Diderot observed, "men stop in front of it for a long time." Through Aug. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Friday evenings until 8:45; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN
1 Bowling Green (514-3700)—**"Booming Out: Mohawk Iron Workers Build New York."** For a hundred years, Mohawk ironworkers have been "booming out," travelling from communities in upstate New York and Canada to the city, working on bridges and skyscrapers from the Empire State Building to the George Washington Bridge. This show documents six generations of Mohawk men from two nations (Akwesane and Kahnawake), combining pictures by photojournalists (including Lewis Hine's famous image of a precipitous lunch on an I-beam) with images shot by the boomers themselves. (All are mounted on panels and interspersed with explanatory text.) There is a section devoted to the World Trade Center, dealing with both its construction and its demise—and the museum's location, just a few blocks from Ground Zero, heightens the impact of this already moving show. Through Oct. 15. (Open daily, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

The monster-wrestling spectacle known as Kaiju Big Battel descends on Warsaw, in Brooklyn (see Night Life—Clubs).

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

GALLERIES-UPTOWN

Summer-hours warning: many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.

DENNIS CLIVE
Big model-airplane sculptures that play around with scale (they're big for clay but small for planes), medium (the clay is as smooth as steel

TABLES FOR TWO

CRAFT

43 E. 19th St. (780-0880)—When this copper-and-leather cathedral opened in the Flatiron district last year, it seemed more like the Church of Latter-Day Food Saints than like an actual restaurant. The chef and owner, Tom Colicchio, intended Craft as solace from the kind of "culinary fatigue" he knew diners had been suffering. But instead, Craft ended up seeming to some like the pulpit of a pious food purist.

Back then, there was not a menu per se; waiters brought a large sheet of paper listing categories of exquisitely high-quality greenmarket and artisanal ingredients (meat, fish and shellfish, vegetables, mushrooms, grains and beans, etc.) and vague descriptions of how they'd be prepared (braised, roasted, sautéed), but no course divisions. From there, building a meal was up to you—even if you had no idea about food pairing or even whether a rabbit ballottine was dinner or dessert. However things turned out, you were apparently getting food as God intended it. Still, big tables of Wall Streeters and well-heeled couples accustomed to having a chef do their cooking stared uncomfortably at the document with crinkled brows, wondering what a Jerusalem artichoke might be good for. When the food came, laid out on massive craftsman's tables, each nearly naked chunk of lobster or seared beef and every noble heap of sugar snap peas or soft polenta was arranged in a pretty copper pot or ceramic dish—and it was ridiculously delicious. But asceticism has never been so expensive. (Seven dollars for a plate of sautéed spinach?)

The menu has taken on more structure since then, and the atmosphere, curiously, has loosened up. While the kitchen now decides whether your hen-of-the-woods mushrooms should be your starter or your side (what madman would eat them as an appetizer?), the unlisted embellishments added to each item (for example, fleur de sel, olive oil, and lemon zest on the raw fluke, served on a tangle of sour sorrel) are a nice surprise. If things are still too overwhelming for you, though, there's always the instructive $85 tasting menu, which recently included roasted halibut with saffron risotto, black sea bass with roasted asparagus and fingerlings, braised beef short ribs with roasted carrots and potato purée, followed by balsamic strawberries and vanilla ice cream. Write that down. (Open weekdays for lunch and dinner, weekends for dinner only. Main courses $22-$36.)

—*Emily Nunn*

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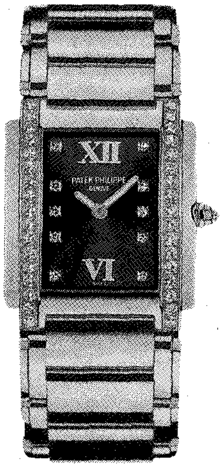
from below, but mottled like snake or ostrich or lizard skin from above), and perspective (paintings on the cockpit glass seem to reflect an assortment of locales, from Mt. Fujiyama to the cliffs of Dover). Sometimes the play can seem a little too much like a lunch-line groaner (one work is titled "Sights Pacific"), but this is a childhood preoccupation after all. Your kid may not be able to make art like this, but he'd probably want to. Through June 28. (Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 987-4997.)

REEVE SCHLEY

Schley's abbreviated landscapes deliver exactly what downtowners expect from uptown galleries: tennis courts, beach views, a kind of sunny, summery good looks. Whether you disdain the pictures as icons of complacency or enjoy their privileged breeziness, Schley's touch is as quick and sure as a winning serve. Through June 14. (James Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 535-5767.)

"COPY"

Thanks to the artists who have been collecting and Xeroxing these copies and faxes and binding them into books, we know that at 4:51 P.M., June 11, 1992, the fax line at Luhring Augustine was engaged in sending a poem (to Christopher Wool)



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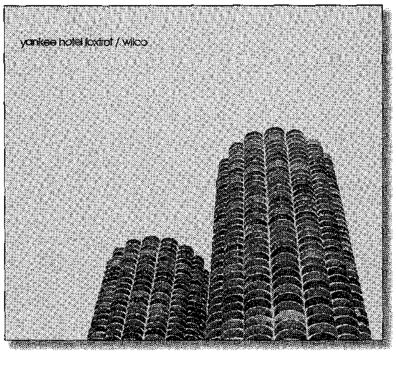


BORDERS® Words on Music

Bob Reamer, Borders' pop music expert, says:
"One of the rare bands that lives up to its press, Wilco defies formulas on a new album that combines poetic songcraft with brave and original instrumental textures, resulting in an alt-rock masterstroke."

NONESUCH

"★★★★ American Classic: Wilco make the first great album of the year."
David Fricke – *Rolling Stone*

"It moves the whole game forward, like Paul Simon's *Graceland* did or Talking Heads' *Remain in Light*, or Beck's *Odelay*."
Tom Moon – *Philadphia Inquirer*

BORDERS
BOOKS•MUSIC•MOVIES•CAFE

about a gal named Michelle whose butt was nasty as hell. The photocopier serves here as local historian and camera—as in Adam Fuss's panorama of his face being dragged across the glass—and as a tool for some recreational samizdat by busy artists: David Hockney color-copies his pictures of street signs and other sights along Mulholland Drive, Harmony Korine revels in a secret crush on Macaulay Culkin, and Larry Clark documents his better-known River Phoenix fetish. Through June 22. (Roth Horowitz, 160A E. 70th St. 717-9067.)

Short List

KARIN DAVIE
Mary Boone, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 752-2929. Through June 22.
MARTIN PURYEAR
McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 688-5951. Through June 21.
ED RUSCHA
C&M Arts, 45 E. 78th St. 861-0020. Through June 8.

GALLERIES-CHELSEA

CAIO FONSECA
Like a supposedly extinct fish still swimming in today's oceans, Fonseca is a living, breathing forty-something High Modernist. That takes some getting used to. At first, your eye tends to focus on the most familiar elements of his calm, quirky, shape-savoring abstractions—the mazes, checkerboards, and guitar contours that amount to a generic School of Paris inheritance. But where did he dream up the rest of his tool kit—these strange crimped wires, wing nuts, and apple cores, or the long serrated implements that look like aboriginal ancestors of the runcible spoon? Sure, Fonseca owes something to Klee and Miró, but if they could visit this show, they might feel tempted to steal an idea or two in exchange. Through June 22. (Kasmin, 293 Tenth Ave., at 27th St. 563-4474.)

BRICE MARDEN
Marden's first New York show in five years is a grand, two-gallery affair. Entitled "Attendants, Bears, and Rocks"—"attendants" and "rocks" refer to Chinese funerary figures and scholars' rocks, and "bears" to a bear that startled the artist at his country place—it advances the webby style of drawing with paint that renewed Marden's career in the mid-nineteen-eighties. Dramatic new paintings involve dusky variants of the rainbow's sequence of colors in overlaid networks of thick, roving lines. Combining Pollock-like energy with Mondrian-like deliberation, they confirm Marden as a major vindicator of abstract art's lately flagging tradition. Also in the show, bristling drawings prove that his spontaneity is unfatigued. Through June 22. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. and 523 W. 24th St., 243-0200.)

Short List

MARK DI SUVERO
Paula Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105. Through June 28.

GALLERIES-DOWNTOWN

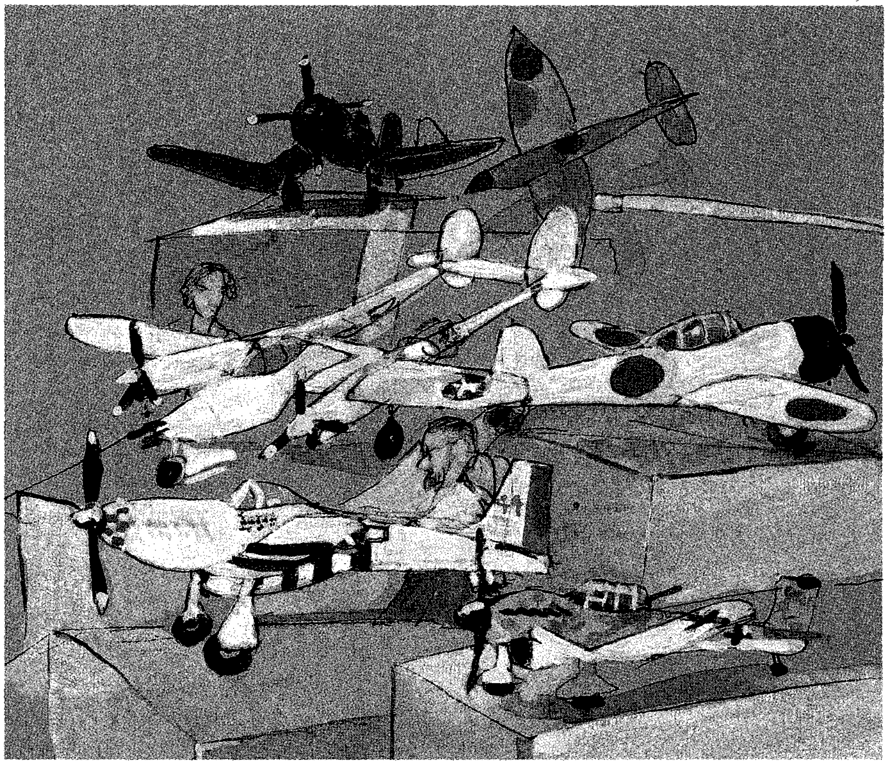
OLAF BREUNING
Breuning's last show posited the existence of a race of Neanderthal surfers; now he has clicked past "Gidget" and MTV to "Halloween" and the WB, with this life-size diorama of an axe-wielding sex doll's rampage. To get the full view of "Hello Darkness," you have to crawl into a library setup ruined by axes and rigged with flickering lights, strewn books, and a smoke machine. The artist draws a fine line between quoting pop culture and sampling it. "It's not just a cut-and-paste job," he says, for the benefit of those who might appreciate such a distinction. "More a kind of remix." Through Aug. 3. (Swiss Institute, 495 Broadway. 925-2035.)

Short List

ELLSWORTH KELLY
Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166. Through July 24.
JASON RHOADES
Zwirner, 43 Greene St. 966-9074. Through June 29.

PHOTOGRAPHY

DANNY LYON
Danny Lyon, who's best known for his work from the civil-rights era and his insider's look at the Chicago Outlaw Motorcycle Club, shows recent photographs made on the Rocky Boy, Blackfoot, Rosebud, and other Indian reservations. In many of these everyday scenes—a family at the dining table, a game of horseshoes—one subject or another holds a fresh Polaroid. This evidence of their involvement in the process explains why Lyon's images have so much more vitality and honesty than the famously posed and propped portraits that Edward S. Curtis took of Native Americans at the turn of the century. Through July 19. (Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070.)



Dennis Clive's ceramic sculptures of airplanes, at Stone.

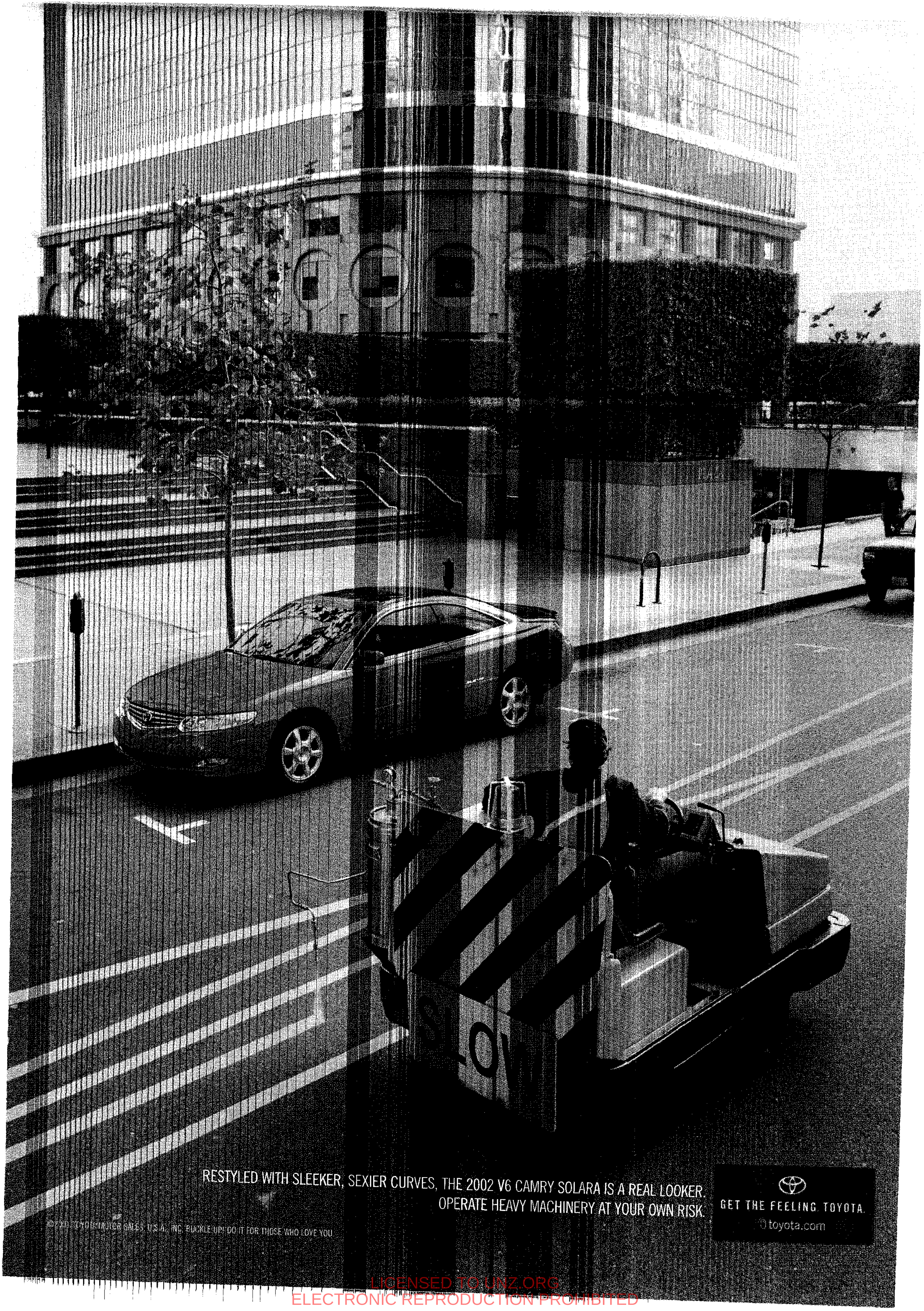
SCOTT PETERMAN
Peterman photographs ice-fishing shacks—bob-houses they're called—with a four-by-five camera from a respectful distance. In the process he monumentalizes the way-up-north temporary, vernacular architecture. The pictures are gorgeous: each plastic, plywood, or aluminum-shelled shack stands centered in the frame, many without a visible horizon line (one memorable shack set on a lake appears to be about to surrender to spring). Peterman's pictures achieve an abstract, formal quality that brings to mind the Kaaba, in Mecca, without the pilgrims. In fact, no people appear in the shots at all, just the traces of the fishermen's individuality (paint jobs, fancy roofs) along with a stray can of Budweiser. Through June 15. (Daniel Silverstein, 520 W. 21st St. 929-4300.)

LAURIE SIMMONS
Last year the artist designed a doll house (with architect Peter Wheelwright) that made you want to sublet your apartment and move right in. The roots of that project (not to mention Simmons's influence on younger artists like Gregory Crewdson) are revealed in this show of color photographs of tiny interiors (populated by little doll-house wives) from the late seventies. The diminutive scale—most of the pictures measure just three-and-a-half by five inches—belies the impact of their haute-fifties domestic scenes. Simmons's pictures, at once deadpan and lyrical, reveal a world that's both stifling and seductive. Through June 29. (Skarstedt, 1018 Madison Ave. 737-2060.)

SHOJI UEDA
Unlike Japan's other great postwar photographers (such as Daido Moriyama and Takuma Nakahira), who took their cameras to the streets of Tokyo, Shoji Ueda travelled to the dunes in western Japan. The photographs from that series are remarkable for their grand absurdity—patient Japanese men in Western suits and women in kimonos pose in the sand against a blank, bright sky. But the images are also an elegant expression of the country's odd postwar twilight period. They convey all the uncertainties their subjects must have felt but also capture the photographer's optimistic belief in resilience. Ueda might be the perkiest Surrealist ever. Through June 15. (292 Gallery, 120 Wooster St. 421-0292.)

"MEXICAN SUITES, PART 1: PHOTOGRAPHY IN MEXICO"
These assorted works by early professionals—industrial photography, photojournalism, and cartes de visite—document the long Mexican struggle with the onslaught of modernity. Two peasants construct a lean-to of saguaro cactus and sticks in the shadow of an Aztec pyramid; a prominent light-skinned family stands among their predominantly dark-skinned servants; and Emiliano Zapata glares at the camera ten years before inciting his revolution. Guillermo Kahlo, a German immigrant and the father of Frida, photographed colonial-era churches, as well as iron and steel works for the government. William Henry Jackson, well known for his pictures of the American West, concentrated on the new Mexican Central Railway. And Charles B. Waite went to Mexico and almost didn't return: he was arrested for immorality after exporting his pictures of girls playing naked on a riverbank. Through June 29. (Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059.)

ROBERT ANDREW PARKER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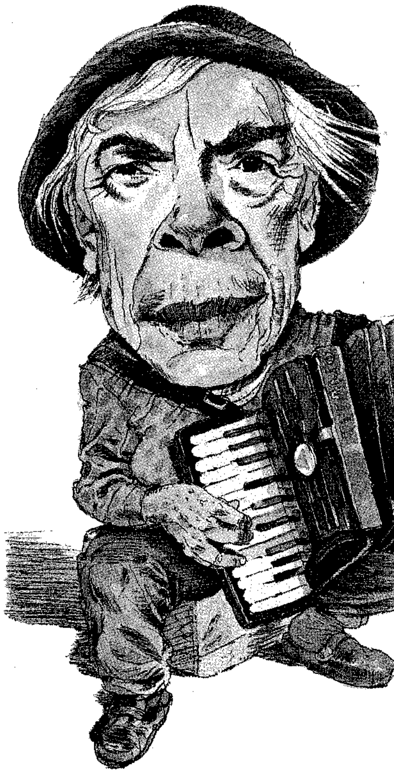
"PARIS AS GAMEBOARD: MAN RAY'S ATGETS"
In 1926, the Surrealist Man Ray bought more than forty photographs from the turn-of-the-century photographer-for-hire Eugène Atget, and assembled them into an album. Atget's Paris scenes—a body of work comprised of now-vanished architectural details, deserted circus grounds, and wonderfully spooky shop windows on the Avenue des Gobelins—prefigure the movement that Man Ray and Duchamp would soon come to champion. This show is worth seeing if only for the chance to see prints done by Atget himself. Through June 15. (Wallach Art Gallery, Columbia University, 116th St. at Broadway. 854-7288. Closed Tuesdays.)

Short List

TINA BARNEY
Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166.
Through June 14.
GREGORY CREWDSON
Luhring Augustine, 531 W. 24th St. 206-9100.
Through June 15.
THOMAS STRUTH
Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. 977-7160.
Through June 15.



Pauline Oliveros performs her music with the Locrian Chamber Players on June 6.

JOHN CUNEO

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

SOTHEBY'S
June 5 at 10:15 A.M.: Old Master paintings, including works by Greuze, Guardi ("View of the Palazzo Ducale as Seen from the Bacino," estimated to bring up to eight hundred thousand dollars), and Chardin. ♦ June 7 at 10:15 A.M. and 2: Decorative art from the twentieth century and the present. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000.)
CHRISTIE'S
June 5-6 at 10 A.M.: The monthly "house sale," two auctions of furniture, silver, rugs, porcelain, and decorative art. ♦ June 7 at 10 A.M.: Old Master paintings. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 636-2000.)
PHILLIPS
June 11 at 2: French and Continental furniture. Many of the most unusual items come from the collection of John Hobbs, including a large ormolu-mounted wine cistern reputedly from the Château de Versailles (estimated to bring up to two hundred thousand dollars). (3 W. 57th St. 940-1200.)
DOYLE
June 5 at 10 A.M.: "La Belle Époque," a sale of furniture and decorative art from the turn of the nineteenth century. (175 E. 87th St. 427-2730.)
SWANN
June 6 at 10:30 A.M. and 2:30: Photographs and photographic literature, featuring several issues of *Camera Work* (including a special supplement of work by Edward Steichen, from 1906) along with photographs by Léonard Misonne, Edward Weston, and many others. (104 E. 25th St. 254-4710.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

"MET IN THE PARKS"
The Metropolitan Opera begins its thirty-sixth season of outdoor performances; all events are free, and no tickets are necessary. For more information, call 362-6000. June 11 at 8: Julius Rudel, New York's trusted opera veteran, conducts **"La Bohème,"** with a cast including Mary Mills, Mary Dunleavy, Frank Lopardo, Mark Oswald, and Paul Plishka. (Great Lawn, Central Park. Enter at 86th St.)
AMERICAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: ALEXANDER ZEMLINSKY AND OSCAR WILDE
Like Arnold Schoenberg, who was his colleague, pupil, and brother-in-law, Zemlinsky—one of the most compelling composers of fin-de-siècle Vienna—was consumed by an overwhelming desire to dramatize his personal dilemmas on the operatic stage, never more so than in two one-act operas based on short works by Oscar Wilde, **"A Florentine Tragedy"** and **"The Dwarf."** The action of the first eerily parallels the scandalous affair Zemlinsky's sister Mathilde carried on with the painter Richard Gerstl, who committed suicide after she returned to Schoenberg. The second, a cruel little farce set at the Spanish court, is really a hopeless love letter to his beautiful pupil Alma Schindler, who threw over the short and unattractive Zemlinsky to marry the more regal Gustav Mahler. Zemlinsky's music, like his subject matter, tends to go a bit over the top, but the conductor-impresario Leon Botstein's revival of the two works is a worthy testament to a composer who, at his best, could combine the knotty intensity of early Schoenberg with the theatricality of Puccini and Strauss. The singers include Dominique Labelle, Mary Phillips, Richard Troxell, and Dean Elzinga, assisted by the Concert Chorale of New York. (Avery Fisher Hall. 721-6500. June 9 at 3.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

FLORILEGIUM CHAMBER CHOIR
JoAnn Rice conducts the group in music by Vaughan Williams (the cantata "Dona Nobis Pacem"), Bruce Saylor, and others. (German Church of St. Paul, 315 W. 22nd St. June 5 at 8. Tickets at the door.)
RIVERSIDE SYMPHONY
Anthony Korf's new piano concerto, "Old Radio," may be a meditation on musical things past (it shows the influences of Schoenberg, Prokofiev, and the jazz of George Shearing), but it's also been crafted as a showpiece for a virtuoso pianist such as Christopher Oldfather, a favorite interpreter of New York's most formidable composers. The conductor is George Rothman, who completes the program with two lesser-known works by well-known masters, Tchaikovsky (the Orchestral Suite No. 1 in D Major) and Delius ("The Walk to the Paradise Garden"). (Alice Tully Hall. 721-6500. June 6 at 8.)
YOUNG VOICES
Two youth choruses that delight in challenges offer anniversary concerts. June 8 at 7:30: The singers of the Brooklyn Youth Chorus, who meet twice weekly to hone their skills at their studio in Cobble Hill, perform new works by Jackson Berkey, Daniel Bernard Roumain, and Kirk Nurock, who have been in residence with the group all season. The program also includes favorite repertory pieces from the chorus's ten years of music-making. (St. Charles Borromeo Church, 21 Sidney Pl., Brooklyn Heights. 718-243-9447.) ♦ June 8 at 8: The Young People's Chorus of New York City performs a Latin-flavored family concert, featuring the Dominican tenor Juan Cuevas (who takes the solo part in Ariel Ramirez's "Misa Criolla," an Argentine folk Mass). (Alice Tully Hall. 721-6500.)
MANHATTAN CHAMBER ORCHESTRA
Kurt Vonnegut has never been very taken with Stravinsky's "Soldier's Tale," which the composer created during the First World War with the Swiss writer C. F. Ramuz: how could Stravinsky have set his music to words that made no mention of the carnage going on around him? Vonnegut's grim response, "The Soldier's Story," is based on the court-martial and execution of Private Eddie Slovik, the only U.S. serviceman put to death for desertion during the Second World War. For the music, he turned to the appropriately named Dave Soldier, the politically engaged downtown composer who enjoys a day job uptown as a neuroscientist at Columbia. Richard Auldon Clark conducts, on a program that also includes works by Stefania Maria de Kennessy and Gerald Chenoweth. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. June 11 at 8.)

RECITALS

QUATTRO MANI
The capable "four hands" of this intrepid two-piano team are those of Alice Rybak and Susan Grace, who perform music by Frank Zappa (the New York première of "Ruth Is Sleeping"), George Crumb (the mystical "Music for a Summer Evening"), and other composers, at Weill Recital Hall. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. June 5 at 8.)
TRINITY CHURCH NOONDAY CONCERTS
June 6 at 1: When the young William Walton set out in the twenties to write "Façade" (an entertainment in which two actors recite poems by Edith Sitwell over the witty accompaniments of a mixed chamber ensemble), he had two powerful recent models from which to borrow: Stravinsky's "Soldier's Tale" and Schoenberg's "Pierrot Lunaire." But his score—dry, whimsical, and stinging with irony—is very much a product of the upper-class South-of-England milieu into which the ambitious, lower-middle-class northern boy had skillfully ingratiated himself. The actors Judith Ivey and Larry Raiken recite the poems of both "Façade" and "Façade II" (a collection of Sitwell pieces that were left out of the 1929 original); the instrumentalists include the clarinettist Igor Begelman and the trumpeter Thomas Hoyt. ♦ June 10 at 1: Trilogy, an ensemble of flute, viola, and harp, performs a pleasant program of Britten, Bridge, Granados (the "Valses Poeticos"), and other composers. (Broadway at Wall St. A contribution is suggested.)
BARGEMUSIC
June 6 and June 8 at 7:30: Music by Mozart (the Quartet in D Major for Flute, Violin, Viola, and Bass), Bach, Handel, and Saint-Saëns, played by the flutist Michael Parloff, the bassist Tim Cobb, and others. ♦ June 7 at 7:30 and June 9 at 4: An impromptu string quartet (featuring the violinist Simone Bernadini and the violist Toby Hoffman) performs works by Haydn and Dvořák (the "American" Quartet), along with the Sonata for Solo Violin, by the German modernist Boris Blacher. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)
LOCRIAN CHAMBER PLAYERS
Pauline Oliveros—the American composer, accordionist, and feminist—has spent the last forty years as a doyenne of the radical fringe, expanding the possibilities of performance with meditation techniques learned from Asian and Native Amer-

ican cultures. The Players, who only perform music written in the last ten years, help celebrate her seventieth birthday, joining her in the New York premières of two works, "Sound Pieces" and "The Heart Chant"; music by Cage and Rzewski ("Knight," with the cellist Greg Hesselink) will also be performed. (Riverside Church Performance Space, 91 Claremont Ave. June 6 at 8. No tickets required.)

SUNDAYS ON THE ISLAND: A TENTH-ANNIVERSARY CONCERT
The violinist Lara St. John is the special guest for this celebration concert, which will also feature a pickup City Island Chamber Orchestra to accompany her in Bach's Violin Concerto in E Major. (She'll also take part in a performance of Tchaikovsky's string sextet, "Souvenir de Florence.") St. John, a vivid and fiery player—and a young woman of considerable beauty—who makes a specialty of Bach, is notorious for the risqué liner art on her albums, but her musicianship is more than good enough to merit listening with your eyes closed if you prefer. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., the Bronx. 212-927-9194. June 9 at 12:30.)

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL ORGAN SERIES
Joseph Nigro, director of music at St. John and St. Mary Church in Chappaqua, performs music by Bach, Clérambault, and others. (Fifth Ave. at 50th St. June 9 at 4:45. No tickets necessary.)

OUT OF TOWN

MUSIC MOUNTAIN
This venerable concert series may lack the hoopla (and humongous crowds) of Tanglewood, its behemoth neighbor to the north on Route 7, but its decades-old devotion to the art of the string quartet—it offers concerts in an acoustically superb rural setting—has made it the darling of discriminating audiences. The season opens with a concert by the flutist Eugenia Zukerman and the Jacques Thibaud String Trio (who are so good that they play from memory), performing music by Mozart, Stamitz, and Viotti. (Routes 63 and 126, Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. June 9 at 3.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

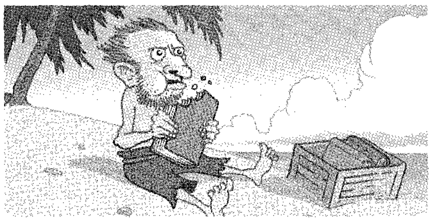
READINGS
June 5 at 6:30: Michael Genét, Kate Burton, Joe Morton, and other actors read short stories by Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, Christine Lincoln, and Joshua Henkin. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) ♦ June 5 at 6:30: Vince Passaro offers passages from his novel, "Violence, Nudity, Adult Content." (Melville gallery, South Street Seaport, 213 Water St. For more information, call 748-8735.) ♦ June 8, starting at noon: Kimiko Hahn, Bob Holman, Marie Ponsot, Sophie Cabot Black, and many, many other poets and writers present a marathon reading of all of Emily Dickinson's poems. (Bowery Poetry Club, 308 Bowery. For more information, call 614-0505 or visit www.emilyreading.com.)

TALKS
June 5 at 7:30: The sociologist Javier Auyero, the political economist Paul Cooney, and the journalist Ernesto Seman discuss the political and economic crisis in Argentina. (Brecht Forum, 122 W. 27th St., 10th floor. For more information, call 242-4201.) ♦ June 5 at 8: The writer and former literary agent John Hodgman hosts the latest installment of the "Little Gray Book Lectures" series: "How and When to Tell a Lie," with Darin Strauss, Arthur Bradford, Colleen Werthmann, Chuck Klosterman, and other novelists and writers. (Galapagos, 70 N. 6th St., Brooklyn. 718-782-5188.) ♦ June 6 at 6:30: The photographers Arthur Leipzig, Saul Leiter, and Sylvia Plachy show slides and discuss their work, which also appears in the Jewish Museum's show "New York: Capital of Photography." (Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. 423-3337.)

BOOK CURRENTS

All Washed Up

In 1704 a Scottish sailor, Alexander Selkirk, was abandoned on a remote South Sea island. Rescued more than four years later, Selkirk became a celebrity, as well as the model for Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. Diana Souhami's **SELKIRK'S ISLAND** (Harcourt) separates truth from literature: although the ever-ingenious Crusoe uses the indigenous goats on his island for clothing and food, Selkirk's goats had been brought from Europe, were disrupting the local ecosystem, and were probably used by Selkirk for sexual release.



TONY MILLIONAIRE

One of the most famous castaway cases of the following century is covered in two new books, **MUTINY ON THE GLOBE**, by Thomas Farel Heffernan (Norton), and **DEMON OF THE WATERS**, by Gregory Gibson (Little, Brown). In 1824, an apparent psychopath, Samuel Comstock, engineered a savage mutiny on a whaling ship and headed for Mili Atoll in the Marshall Islands. His intention was to establish his own Kurtz-style kingdom; after a bizarre series of killings and desertions that claimed Comstock's life, only two crew members were left, among inhabitants who were unsure whether to trust them or not. The men became expert in the native culture, adopting the local dress and compiling a list of island vocabulary that has elicited praise from scholars of the Marshallese language.

In a shrinking world, castaways are rarer. **MAGELLANIA** (Welcome Rain), a posthumous novel by Jules Verne translated from the French by Benjamin Ivry, tells the story of Kaw-djer, a mysterious white man who lives among the people of Magellania (at the tip of South America). But the outside world keeps intruding. Chile and Argentina jostle for possession of Magellania, jeopardizing the isolation of a voluntary castaway who does not want to be rescued.

—Leo Carey

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MOVIES

OPENING

BAD COMPANY
A veteran C.I.A. agent (Anthony Hopkins) has nine days to transform a streetwise bookie (Chris Rock) into a gentleman spy, in a thriller directed by Joel Schumacher. Opening June 7.

CHERISH
Finn Taylor's comedy about a fantasy-prone lover of eighties music (Robin Tunney) who develops a crush on her parole officer (Tim Blake Nelson) while under house arrest. Also with Liz Phair. Opening June 7. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

DIVINE SECRETS OF THE YA-YA SISTERHOOD
An adaptation of the novel by Rebecca Wells in which a New York playwright (Sandra Bullock) contends with her eccentric Louisiana mother (Ellen Burstyn). The cast includes Maggie Smith, James Garner, and Ashley Judd. Opening June 7.

THE FAST RUNNER (ATANARJUAT)
Zacharias Kunuk directed this dramatization of an ancient Inuit folk epic. In Inuktitut. Opening June 7. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

SECRET SOCIETY
A British comedy about female sumo wrestling. Opening June 7. (Quad Cinema.)

FILM NOTES

ABOUT A BOY
In this adaptation of the Nick Hornby novel, Hugh Grant's usual character, the shy and charming English bachelor, gets seriously revised into a kind of media-age Oblomov, Will Freeman, a connoisseur of pop music and old movies. Will bestirs himself only to chase girls whom he has no intention of sticking with. By degrees, this selfish layabout becomes friends with Marcus (Nicholas Hoult), an unhappy twelve-year-old boy whose mother (Toni Collette) is a seriously depressed hippie in feathers. The directors Paul and Chris Weitz—the "American Pie" brothers—have tried hard not to make a tear-jerker, and at its best the movie is knowing and tart. But the structure of the story inevitably encourages shamelessness: there's an awful scene in which Will makes a fool of himself, singing "Killing Me Softly" in a school auditorium to save Marcus from performing alone.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/02.) (Battery Park 16, Beekman, East 86th Street Cinemas, Empire 25, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

BARTLEBY
You might prefer a more cheerful movie, but Jonathan Parker's adaptation of "Bartleby, the Scrivener" gets to you. Herman Melville wrote this short story, about a legal copyist who refuses to work, after the disappointing publications of "Moby-Dick" and "Pierre." Parker sets the action in a drably colored modern office, so generic that it's camp. Crispin Glover, with his shock of black hair and wispy white face, is an impressive Bartleby; he pulls off the neat trick of being passive yet dangerous. He's also a true cipher: when he's staring up at the office vent, it's hard to tell if Bartleby has embraced the wisdom of no escape or if he's just spaced out. The veterans who round out the cast provide the needed comic relief, especially Glenne Headly as the firm's hypercordial secretary, a sexpot with flawless diction.—*Michael Agger* (Angelika Film Center.)

THE BELIEVER
There is considerable daring in Henry Bean's intense drama about a young Jewish Nazi in New York. Danny Balint is an intellectual trying to succeed as a thug; he beats up the studious yeshiva students he sees on the New York subway because he wants to destroy who he once was. His hatred of Jews is based not on the belief that they are too powerful but rather that they are not powerful enough. Bean doesn't quite open the material up visually—he's more a writer than a director—but the canny young actor Ryan Gosling is magnetic as the confused Danny, who is never more Jewish than at those moments when he is trying to escape Judaism.—*D.D.* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Village East Cinemas.)

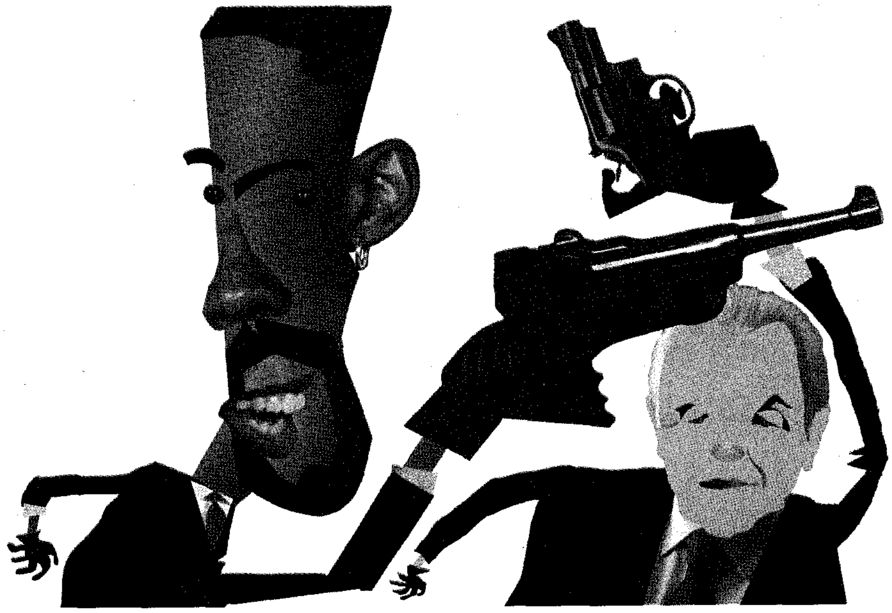
CQ
An ambitious début film, written and directed by Roman Coppola (son of Francis, brother of Sofia) that aims to have the irreverent hum of Fellini's "8½," Truffaut's "Day for Night," and Vadim's "Barbarella," for starters. The plot, such as it is, concerns an editor turned director (Jeremy Davies with an Antoine Doinel haircut) who lands in the revolutionary Paris of 1969, where he's given the assignment of polishing off a cheesy Italian science-fiction spy flick. "CQ" looks terrific, thanks to the production design of a master, Dean Tavoularis, but Coppola's relentless referencing of other movies dilutes the drama; each scene becomes another film-student pleasure.—*Bruce Diones* (Eastside Playhouse.)

ELLING
Two former psychiatric patients—a mouse of a man called Elling and a giant oaf named Kjell Bjarne—move into a welfare apartment in Oslo, where they poke and prod each other out of their walled-in lives. The movie, directed by Petter Naess, draws its power and charm from a familiar source: the way we all occasionally feel like misfits, continually discovering how to live, scared to cross the street. In Norwegian.—*M.A.* (Angelika Film Center and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

ENOUGH
Jennifer Lopez lends her considerable screen presence, and not much more, to this one-dimensional story about a crazy but hunky husband (Billy Campbell) who hunts down his fleeing wife and child. The director Michael Apted—who should know better—attempts to add some zing with a bogus conspiracy plot and dubious empowerment episodes.—*B.D.* (Battery Park 16, 84th Street Six-plex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
An impish, sunny, and perfectly unnecessary production of the Wilde classic, directed by Oliver Parker. The Anthony Asquith version, from 1952, was stagey and artificial, which felt right for Wilde's confection. This movie is set in a "real" London of top hats, naughty music-hall girls, and primitive automobiles. Frances O'Connor, as Gwendolen Fairfax, is sexually very knowing, and gets the name Ernest tattooed on her rump. Colin Firth is a good Jack Worthing, but Rupert Everett's limited comic resources are exposed in the role of Algernon—he's arch rather than funny. Judi Dench makes the odd mistake of playing Lady Bracknell as if she were a real person, rather than the most entertaining caricature in the history of the theatre. With Edward Fox, who mumbles superbly as Algie's rarely paid manservant.—*D.D.* (Angelika Film Center, BAM Rose Cinemas, and Paris.)

INSOMNIA
A dark and fidgety picture from Christopher Nolan, who made such a splash with "Memento." Al Pacino plays Will Dormer, a detective from Los Angeles, who is flown to the wilds of Alaska (couldn't they find anyone closer?) to unravel a nasty, intractable killing. Soon, he is fouled up in another death, which everyone hopes was accidental. Meanwhile, a local suspect (Robin Williams) shows his face, or, at any rate, gives Dormer something to run after. The ensuing chase scenes are the best thing in the film: Nolan's busy, ravenous technique has something to bite on. The rest of the movie shows what happens when a style goes in search of a mystery; the fretful power play of the two leads, like the cop's yawning sleeplessness, seems not so much grounded in character as applied like makeup. Still, Nolan's depiction of desolate backwaters is immaculate, and the women in the tale—Hilary Swank as a perky cop and Maura Tierney as the sad-faced keeper of the hotel—somehow leaven the air of contrivance.—*Anthony Lane* (5/27/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Battery Park 16, Cinema 1, East 86th Street Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Theatre, and Village Theatre VII.)



Chris Rock and Anthony Hopkins in "Bad Company."

THE LADY AND THE DUKE
The latest project from the unstoppable Eric Rohmer (who, at the age of eighty-two, seems as resourceful as ever) is set during the bloodier travails of the French Revolution. A resident Englishwoman (Lucy Russell) finds that her safety in Paris is threatened, first by her ill-advised monarchism, and then by her continuing devotion to the Duke of Orléans (Jean-Claude Dreyfus), whose own Republican credentials start to crumble. As so often, Rohmer seems to be challenging himself to make as talkative a film as possible without actually sabotaging the dramatic tension; on top of that, he has shot his costumed characters on digital video, against painted cityscapes that could hardly be mistaken for the real thing. Fortunately, the plight of his heroine is just about fraught enough to survive these contrivances, and it is fun to imagine French audiences, schooled in the glories of the period, watching the parade of squabbles, whispers, and petty suspicions that is staged by a skeptical director. In French.—*A.L.* (5/13/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Quad Cinema.)

LATE MARRIAGE
An Israeli in his early thirties, Zaza (Lior Ashkenazi) has all the rueful moroseness that you would expect to find in a graduate student in philosophy. He is also marriageable but single, a predicament that drives his parents to despair. The cause of such diffidence, even when Zaza is faced with prospective brides of unquestionable beauty, can be traced to his secret girlfriend, Judith (Ronit Elkabetz), a divorced mother of one. Dover Koshashvili's film swings back and forth between the hero's family, with their impositions and great expectations, and the loving, liberated randiness of his semi-hidden life. Up to the end, you are kept guessing as to which will prevail. In Georgian and Hebrew.—*A.L.* (5/27/02) (Cinema Village and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
The Second City comic performer Nia Vardalos lights up this low-budget "Moonstruck" about a homely girl and her overly dramatic Greek-immigrant family. When, after a quick makeover, she falls in love with a charming Wasp (John Corbett), her mother, father, and assorted relatives play the inevitable culture clash to the hilt. (Much of this material has been culled from Vardalos's effective standup routines.) The cast includes the wonderfully dotty Andrea Martin, Michael Constantine as the ouzo-swigging dad, and everyone's favorite ethnic mom, Lainie Kazan. They bring a pleasant sitcom buzz to the movie.—*B.D.* (Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.)

THE PIANO TEACHER
Michael Haneke's calmly lucid masterpiece is about a seemingly unmanageable subject: a sadomasochistic piano teacher, Professor Erika Kohut (Isabelle Huppert), who maintains a sternly proper façade at the Vienna Conservatory while tormenting and playing dirty tricks on her talented students. Erika tries to control the insolently charming and handsome young piano student (Benoît Magimel) who wants to be her lover. She's a remarkable dramatic creation—an appalling but plausible human being brought to life by one of the world's bravest actresses. This is a genuinely shocking movie (one scene of self-mutilation is hard to take), but it's supremely intelligent, too, and there isn't a trace of sensationalism. In French.—*D.D.* (4/1/02) (Cinema Village.)

THE PRODUCERS
Zero Mostel as a producer who sells 25,000 percent of a play, intending to produce a flop so that he won't have to pay the backers anything. Naturally, he produces a hit. Some of the material is funny in an original way, but Mel Brooks, who wrote and directed (both for the first time), doesn't get the timing right, and good gags fall apart or become gross or just don't develop. The sequence consisting of tryouts for the role of Hitler in the play, which is called "Springtime for Hitler," is potentially so great that what he does with it lets you down. Still, as terrible as this 1968 picture is, a lot of it is very enjoyable. For satire of the theatre as inspired as Brooks' gags at their best, it's not hard to put up with the ineptitude and the amateurish camera angles. It's even possible to put up with Zero Mostel in closeup. (He was not one to tone his effects down for the camera.) With Gene Wilder, whose whining, strangled-voice bit is almost a shtick of genius.—*Pauline Kael* (Film Forum; June 7-11.)

STEPHEN KRONINGER

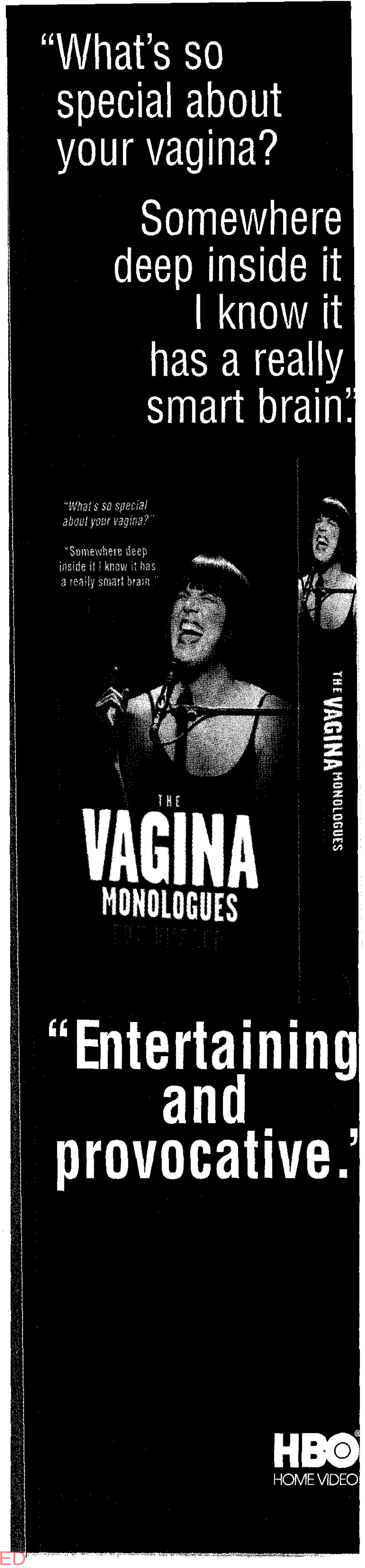
LE SAMOURAÏ
In Jean-Pierre Melville's coolest, sleekest, and most influential salute to the hardworking professionals of the French underworld, Alain Delon plays a hit man who dodges the minions of a double-crossing employer, as well as the police, after murdering a night-club boss. Until the final melancholy twist, Melville uses Delon's daggerlike pretty-boy looks for ambiguity. Although the antihero has a faithful moll (Nathalie Delon) and a thing for the night club's alluring pianist (Cathy Rosier), his attachments are all business, and the writer-director doesn't try to humanize him. He doesn't have to: he banks on our empathizing with Delon's loner as he outsteps an organization man par excellence, the inspector on his case (François Périer). The filmmaker's precision craftsmanship, compelling throughout, triumphs in a chase through the Métro. Cinematography by Henri Decaë. Based on the novel "The Ronin," by Joan McLeod. Released here in 1972 as "The Godson." In French.—*Michael Sragow* (Thalia Theatre; June 8-9.)

SEVEN CHANCES
The plot gimmick—the hero must be married in a few hours in order to collect an inheritance—was an antique, and the play flopped on Broadway, but what Buster Keaton and his gag writers managed to do with the material will be everlastingly fresh. When the news of the shy hero's need to wed is published in the papers, prospective brides arrive, singly at first and then in droves, and the distraught man, fleeing them, dislodges a boulder, which dislodges others, and soon he is pursued by hundreds of huge boulders. It's a lovely 1925 comedy, imaginatively—possibly faultlessly—directed by Keaton.—*P.K.* (Film Forum; June 6.)

SPIDER-MAN
The perils and advantages of being bitten by a genetically modified spider are made abundantly clear in Sam Raimi's enjoyable, if broken-backed, exercise in high-cost pulp. Tobey Maguire plays Peter Parker, who develops a useful ability to hurl threads of web from his wrists and thus becomes, to his delight, the highest swinger in town. This prowess earns him the adoration of Mary Jane (Kirsten Dunst) and the enmity of the Green Goblin (Willem Dafoe), whose infinite capacity for evil is slightly undercut by the fact that he began life as a man called Norman. The movie is all over the place, unable to decide, for instance, whether New York should be shot as a livable city or as a Gothamite gulf of crime; similarly, Dafoe delivers a cartoon while Maguire offers a funny, rueful study in uncertain heroics.—*A.L.* (5/13/02) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea West, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

SPIRIT: THE STALLION OF THE CIMARRON
An animated Dreamworks feature about a noble mustang who's captured and abused by the U.S. Cavalry. This politically correct American-history lesson (à la "Pocahontas") is drawn cleanly, sometimes excitingly, but the dialogue (Matt Damon does the voice of Spirit) is generic and humorless, and the syrupy ballads by Bryan Adams are horrendous. The audience will quickly long for their own freedom.—*B.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Theatre, and Union Square.)

STAR WARS:
EPISODE II—ATTACK OF THE CLONES
The Republic? The Federation? The Separatists? The clone army? The droid army? The Siths? The Kith? The Kin? The plot is incomprehensible to anyone over fourteen, and the actors intone their starched-collar lines as if they were attending a convention of rural vicars. But, allowing for



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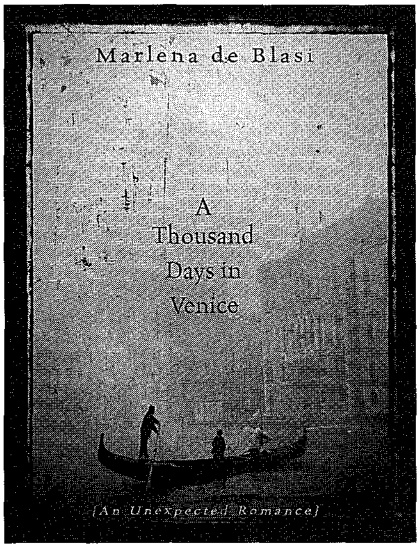

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ALISON SEIFFER

Opening June 7, Robin Tunney in "Cherish."

some dull moments, George Lucas's latest movie has considerable style. Digital invention is becoming grander, wilder, more free-spirited: the multilevelled cities of the past overflow with life. It would be nice to think that Lucas's visual imagination is just now taking off.—*D.D.* (5/20/02) (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, Empire 25, Murray Hill Cinemas, Olympia I and II, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 64th and 2nd, Union Square, and Ziegfeld.)

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS

It has a female chorus—it's that important a movie. This latest in a series of super-productions devoted to Tom Clancy's fictional C.I.A. agent Jack Ryan (Ben Affleck) also features such familiar sights as mockups of the White House Situation Room, nuclear missiles rising on their launchers for takeoff, and an international cast of grimly serious actors speaking in foreign languages and dragging their subtitles from room to room. It's not the fault of the filmmakers (Paul Attanasio and Daniel Pyne wrote the script; Phil Alden Robinson directed) that actual events have overtaken the portentous clichés. But, as an evocation of danger, the movie is nowhere near serious or intelligent enough to satisfy our current sense of alarm. In a bold updating of Clancy's plot, the villains of the piece are turned into . . . Nazis.—*D.D.* (6/3/02) (Astor Plaza, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Lincoln Square, Metro Twin, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 72nd Street East, and Village Theatre VII.)

THIRTEEN CONVERSATIONS ABOUT ONE THING

Jill Sprecher's sophomore effort is one of those movies in which everyone speaks like a French philosopher and the camera cuts away just as things are about to get clumsy and interesting. It's set in New York and structured like a puzzle, complete with intertitles offering fortune-cookie wisdom. As the piano soundtrack plays, a veteran cast of all ages (John Turturro, Clea DuVall, Amy Irving, Matthew McConaughey) show up to ponder true happiness and their distance from it. The movie's salvation is Alan Arkin, as world-weary and gravel-voiced as always. He's the one true cynic in the bunch, and as he puts the screws to a blissful co-worker, the film finds some of the lift it's been searching for.—*M.A.* (Empire 25, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

UNFAITHFUL

Connie (Diane Lane), a suburban New York housewife, gets picked up in SoHo by a sexy young Frenchman (Olivier Martinez) and falls into a passionate afternoons-only affair; her husband, Edward (Richard Gere), senses from the beginning that something is amiss. The director Adrian Lyne has been making erotic dramas for years, and this is his most earnest and nonexploitative effort to date. The movie is very scrupulous about the feelings of Connie and Edward and the damage adultery can do to a family. If only the characters were more interesting. The three principals have no dimensions beyond what's functionally required by the situation, and we can't quite tell if the husband and wife are silent because their marriage is a zero or because the screenwriters forgot to give them something to say. Lane goes through the stages of denial, resistance, joy, and guilt with virtuoso ability; Gere, looking a little older these days, is quiet and saddened—it's amusing to see him wearing the horns for a change. The movie is based on Claude Chabrol's 1969 thriller "La Femme Infidèle," but it lacks the cool perversity of the original; it's a highly responsible sex movie.—*D.D.* (Battery Park 16, Chelsea Cinemas, East 85th Street, Empire 25, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Village East Cinemas.)

Y TU MAMÁ TAMBIÉN

The latest effort from the Mexican director Alfonso Cuarón is a stripped-down road movie: two teen-age friends, one rich (Diego Luna) and one poor (Gael García Bernal), borrow a car and set off to find the perfect beach, in the company of a Spanish woman (Maribel Verdú) who is not merely older, but married. Plus, she seems inexplicably happy to take either, or both, of them to bed. All the boys' dreams, in other words, have come true, and they can hardly handle it. What ensues is a sad and sexy picaresque, as everyone's illusions are peeled off along with their clothes. Cuarón's style is so open and relaxed, and his actors are so attuned to one another, that not until the final scene, with its litany of revelations, do we see that what felt life-affirming has also been a meditation on the slide of time, and on the offstage presence of death. Unrated, and therefore full of proper sex, with all the improprieties intact. In Spanish.—*A.L.* (3/18/02) (BAM Rose Cinemas, Empire 25, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and Sunshine Cinema.)

ALSO PLAYING

CREMASTER 3
Film Forum.
MONSOON WEDDING (2/18 & 25/02)
First & 62nd Cinemas, Sunshine Cinema, and 34th Street Theatre.
THE NEXT BIG THING
Empire 25, Sutton 1 and 2, and Village East Cinemas.
NIJINSKY: THE DIARIES OF VASLAV NIJINSKY
Film Forum.
UNDERCOVER BROTHER
Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 42nd Street E Walk, Kips Bay Theatre, Orpheum VII, and 34th Street Theatre.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

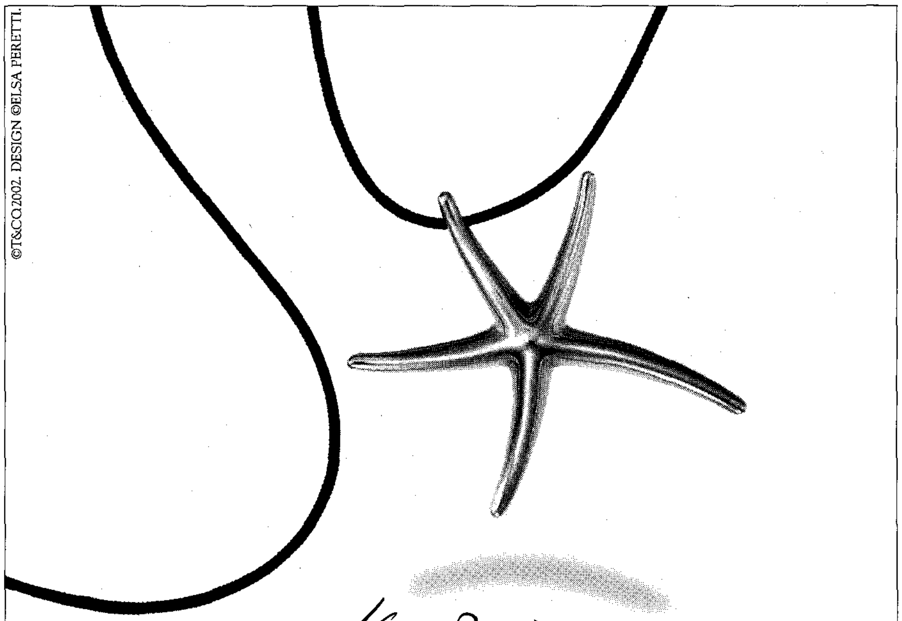
Unless noted, call 777-FILM for show times.

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St.
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at Broadway.
BAM Rose Cinemas, 30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn.
Battery Park 16, West St. at Vesey St.
Beekman, Second Ave. at 66th St.
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd St.
Chelsea West, 333 W. 23rd St.
Cinemas 1, 2, and 3, Third Ave. at 60th St.
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th St. (924-3363).
East 86th Street Cinemas, Third Ave. at 86th St.
84th Street Sixplex, Broadway at 84th St.
Empire 25, on 42nd St. near Eighth Ave. (398-3939).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th St.
Film Forum, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd St.
42nd Street E Walk, 42nd St. near Eighth Ave.
Kips Bay Theatre, Second Ave. at 32nd St.
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, Broadway at 63rd St.
Lincoln Square, Broadway at 68th St.
Metro Twin, Broadway at 99th St.
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th St.
New York Twin, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19th Street East 6, Broadway at 19th St.
Olympia I and II, Broadway at 107th St.
Orpheum VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
Paris, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th St.
Pioneer, 155 E. 3rd St. (254-3300).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th St.
The Screening Room, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
72nd Street East, Third Ave. at 71st St.
64th and 2nd, Second Ave. at 64th St.
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd St.
Sunshine Cinema, 139-143 E. Houston St.
Sutton 1 and 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34th Street Theatre, 312 W. 34th St.
Union Square, Broadway at 13th St.
Village East Cinemas, Second Ave. at 12th St.
Village Theatre VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th St.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE
35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A retrospective of movies produced by the New York-based Killer Films. June 8 at 1: "Dottie Gets Spanked" (1993, Todd Haynes) and "He Was Once" (1989, Mary Hestand). ♦ June 8 at 2: "I Shot Andy Warhol" (1996, Mary Harron). ♦ June 8 at 4:30: "Velvet Goldmine" (1998, Haynes). ♦ June 9 at 1: A "surprise short about a seventies pop star" by Haynes (1987) and "Don't Look Up My Skirt Unless You Mean It" (1994, Christine Vachon). ♦ June 9 at 2: "Happiness" (1998, Todd Solondz). ♦ A dialogue with the director Kimberly Peirce and a screening of "Boys Don't Cry" (1999). June 9 at 5. ♦ Repertory nights. June 8-9 at 7:30: "Bob le Flambeur" (1955, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French).
ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5110)—Films by Mike Leigh. June 6 at 7, June 8 at 9:45, and June 9 at 3: "Career Girls" (1997). ♦ June 6 at 9, June 8 at 7, and June 9 at 8:45: "Secrets & Lies" (1996). ♦ June 7 at 7, June 8 at 4, and June 9 at 5:30: "Topsy-Turvy" (1999).
BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-777-3456)—June 5-6 at 4:30 and 8: "The Mad Songs of Fernanda Hussein" (2001, John Gianvito). ♦ June 7 at 7: "Marketa Lazarová" (1967, Frantisek Vlácil; in Czech). ♦ June 8-9 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "The Sleepy Time Gal" (2001, Christopher Münch). ♦ June 10 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "My Beautiful Laundrette" (1985, Stephen Frears). ♦ June 11 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:10: "The White Dove" (1960, Vlácil; in Czech).
FILM FORUM
W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—Through June 6: "The Great American Comedy." June 5 at 2, 5:15, and 8:15: "Unknown Chaplin" (1983, Kevin Brownlow and David Gill). ♦ June 6 at 1:30, 4:35, and 7:45: "The Cameraman" (1929, Edward Sedgwick, Jr.). ♦ June 6 at 2:55, 6, and 9:10: "Seven Chances" (†). ♦ June 7-11 at 1, 2:50, 4:40, 6:30, 8:20, and 10:10: A new print of "The Producers" (†).
FLORENCE GOULD HALL
55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—The films of Bertrand Blier. June 11 at 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, and 9: "Beau-père" (1981; in French).
THE GOLDEN AGE OF CINEMA FESTIVAL
Cantor Film Center, 36 E. 8th St. (917-750-3651)—June 11 at 6:30: "Night on Earth" (1991, Jim Jarmusch), followed by an interview with Jarmusch and Giancarlo Esposito.
THALIA THEATRE
2537 Broadway, at 95th St. (864-5400)—Classic French cinema. The 2 P.M. screenings are double features. June 8 at 2, 6:15, and 8:45 and June 9 at 2: "Story of Women" (1988, Claude Chabrol). ♦ June 8 at 4 and June 9 at 4, 6:15, and 8:30: "Le Samouraï" (†).
WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (875-5600)—Through June 12: "Open Roads: New Italian Cinema." June 5 at 1: "Days" (2001, Laura Muscardin). ♦ June 5 at 3:30: "Santa Maradona" (2001, Marco Ponti). ♦ June 5 at 9 and June 7 at 3:30: "Winter" (2002, Nina di Majo). ♦ June 7 at 1: "Sun in My Eyes" (2001, Andrea Porporati). ♦ June 7 at 6 and June 8 at 7:15: "The Profession of Arms" (2001, Ermanno Olmi). ♦ June 7 at 8:30 and June 9 at 3:30: "Red Moon" (2001, Antonio Capuano). ♦ June 8 at 5 and June 10 at 1 and 6: "Chimera" (2001, Pappi Corsicato). ♦ June 8 at 9:30, June 9 at 8:15, and June 11 at 3:15: "Paz!" (2002, Renato Di Maria). ♦ June 9 at 1: "One Man Up" (2001, Paolo Sorrentino). ♦ June 9 at 6 and June 11 at 1: "Sailing Home" (2001, Vincenzo Marra). ♦ June 10 at 3:30 and 8:15: "The Dervish" (2001, Alberto Rondalli).



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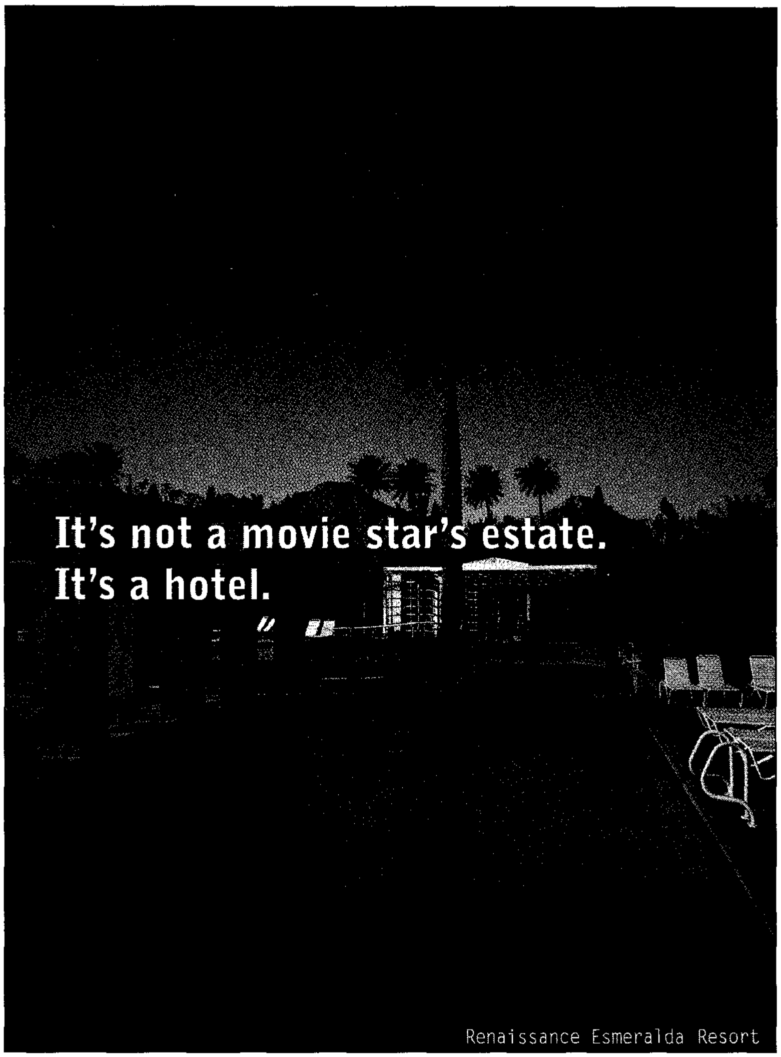

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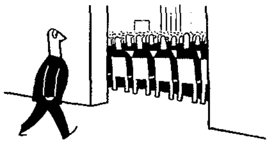
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

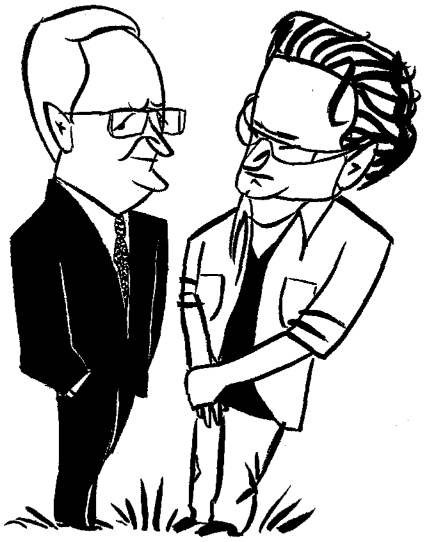
COMMENT
THEM, TOO



Last Friday, a couple of Irishmen named Paul returned from what the younger of the two, but probably not the older, might term a long, strange trip. The older one, who is not really Irish (his ancestors were, but he is a native of St. Louis), is Paul O'Neill, sixty-six, the Secretary of the Treasury in the Bush Administration. The younger one, who is not really named Paul (his passport identifies him as Paul Hewson, but that's a technicality), is Bono, forty-two, the uninomial lead singer and lyricist of U2. The long, strange trip was a ten-day journey to Ghana, South Africa, Uganda, and Ethiopia, in a United States government airplane, ostensibly to study questions of poverty and development and, maybe, to see whose ideas on the subject make more sense, the Cabinet secretary's or the rock star's.

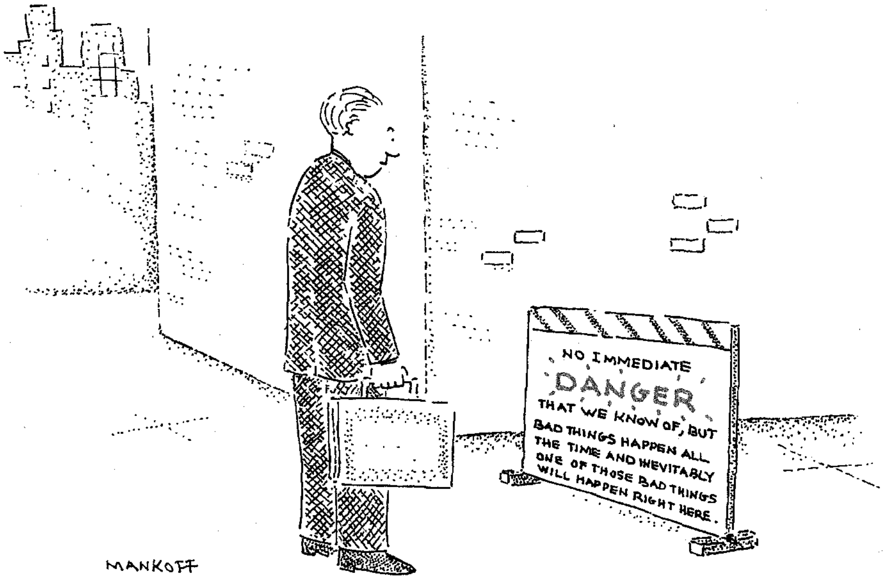
U2—the name, originally nicked from the high-flying spy plane, evokes a bond with the audience, as in "you, too"—is a quartet whose members have been making music together since they were schoolboys in Dublin. They play good, loud, guitar-and-vocal rock and roll. Some of the songs that Bono has written are "political," in that they refer to events like the Irish troubles and the "disappeared" of Central America. But what is really political about Bono is his politics. As a celebrity trying to change the world, he has no peer. Stars with a cause are often dismissed as dilettantes. This, if not always unfair, is beside the point. The world would not be a better place, on balance, if Barbra Streisand never raised a dime for female candidates, Paul McCartney forgot all about land mines, and Richard Gere shut up about the Dalai Lama. With Bono, however, the dilettante question does not arise. He is unarguably serious, and his talent for politics has turned out to be the equal of his talent for music.

In the mid-eighties, Bono and U2 participated in Live Aid and Band Aid, the famine-relief benefits organized by Bob Geldof. But Bono did not leave it at that. With his wife, he spent six weeks working in an Ethiopian orphanage—the beginning of a long process of self-education. Eventually, he became a mainstay of the Jubilee 2000 movement, which aimed at providing debt relief for poor countries. Debt relief is a curiously abstract cause for a star to adopt. It has no poster children and offers no obvious photo ops. But it happens to be a useful, creative, and efficient approach to Third World development. Last month, in conjunction with Geldof, and with funding from George Soros and Bill Gates, Bono launched a new operation, called DATA (Debt, Aid, and Trade for Africa), which advocates not only debt relief but also fairer trade rules and a greater effort against Africa's nightmarish AIDS pandemic. And it's not just this kind of focussed persistence that makes him unique among celebrity causeniks. It's also knowledgeability—by all accounts, he can more than hold his own in a roomful of development specialists—and a canny sense of how to use it, along with celebrity and charm, to influence élites. He knows how to talk to conservatives, too, despite the shades and the earrings. Though the Bush Administration remains unconverted, Bono is an important reason that supporters of the debt-relief idea quickly came to include Jesse Helms and Pat Robertson, as well as Bill Clinton and the usual liberal suspects.



Secretary O'Neill is an interesting character, too. His invitation to Bono is proof of that. Certainly, the trip offered the Administration the political and public-relations benefits of hipness by

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL


NO IMMEDIATE DANGER THAT WE KNOW OF, BUT BAD THINGS HAPPEN ALL THE TIME AND INEVITABLY ONE OF THOSE BAD THINGS WILL HAPPEN RIGHT HERE.
MANKOFF

proximity and altruism by association. But there was a risk. The template was as much "Crossfire" as "The Odd Couple," and Bono was pretty much guaranteed to get the better of the argument. Passion trumps parsimony when the cameras roll, as surely as rock stars trump businessmen.

O'Neill's message, in essence, was that foreign aid should be more efficiently targeted before lots more money is added to the budget; Bono's, in essence, was to agree about efficiency while insisting that much bigger bucks are needed. After the pair visited a primary school in Uganda, O'Neill remarked, "I think we need to make this into an individual-people thing, and not some cosmic stuff about billions of dollars." Bono pointed out that many schools like the one they were visiting had been built with funds freed up by an "organized, government-to-government cancelling of debts." The school, he said, was "an example of why we need big money for development." And, he added, "if the Secretary can't see that, we're going to have to get him a pair of glasses and a new set of ears." Ouch.

The truth is that America's foreign-aid budget is shockingly low, even if one takes into account the informal division of labor among Western countries whereby the United States does the military heavy lifting. As a percentage of G.D.P., Denmark gives ten times as much as America, Britain gives three times as much, and Germany and Japan each give well over twice as much. American aid to sub-Saharan Africa amounts to less than one one-hundredth of one per cent of national income—the equivalent of somebody who makes a hundred and thirty thousand dollars a year flipping a quarter to a homeless person once a week. It's not enough.

On the tour's final leg, Bono, in a speech to a conference of the African Development Bank, offered O'Neill a friendly word of caution. "The trip has raised hopes," he said. "It would be scandalous to raise hopes without delivery. The Secretary knows about delivering results." And Bono, for his part, knows about following up. If O'Neill and his boss end up delivering nothing—if the trip appears in retrospect to have been just another bit of "compassionate conservative" image-polishing—they can expect to hear from the lead singer of U2, with the volume cranked.

—*Hendrik Hertzberg*

PENCILS DOWN!

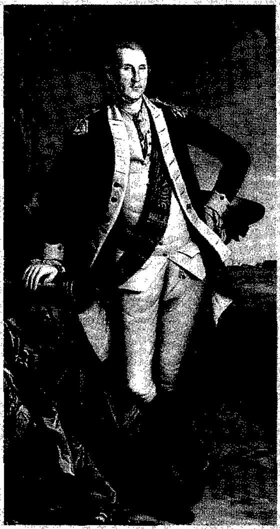
THE STATE EDITS THE CLASSICS

In 1887, Anton Chekhov said in a letter to Maria Kiselyova that the writer "should . . . acknowledge that manure piles play a highly respectable role in the landscape and that evil passions are every bit as much a part of life as good ones." Such strength of stomach is not shared by the New York State Board of Regents, which oversees the tests that every New York public-school student must pass in order to graduate. Last summer, the Regents chose to include Chekhov's short story "An Upheaval" on the English exam, requiring students to refer to it in writing an essay on "the meaning of human dignity." The Regents felt it necessary to shovel some of Chekhov's more pungent details out of this story, which concerns the theft of a brooch from an upper-class home: gone is the humiliation that the mistress of the house forces upon her servants ("They stripped us all naked and searched us" is in Chekhov's text but not in the Regents' version) and gone is the suspected governess's fear of being "searched like a street walker."

These edits were apparently made in accordance with the State Education Department's Sensitivity Review Guidelines, which are intended to prevent any injury to the sensibilities of the testees through exposure to risky works of literature, and which state that test questions must be examined for racial, religious, or gender stereotypes and should conform to a whole raft of other sensitivity considerations. (The current guidelines can be found on the S.E.D.'s Web site.) Admirers of Chekhov and other authors similarly bowdlerized might detect a whiff of the barnyard in the Regents' editorial judgments: in a test from three years ago, an excerpt from Ernesto Galarza's memoir "Barrio Boy" was altered so that the author, in describing two of his friends, speaks not of "a skinny Italian boy" and "a fat Portuguese" but, rather, of "a thin Italian boy" and "a heavy Portuguese," in accordance with the S.E.D.'s concern that test materials should not "degrade people on the basis of physical appearance." (Galarza is also not allowed to refer to the sensitivity guidelines enforced by his own school: "We were sure to be marched up to the principal's office for calling someone a wop, a chink, a dago or a greaser" was altered to read, "We were sure to be marched up to the principal's office for calling someone a bad name.") Two years ago, in a selection from "Stop-Time," Frank Conroy's memoir about his boyhood, a passage about a swimming outing—"It was easy to undress. We wore only blue jeans. I re-

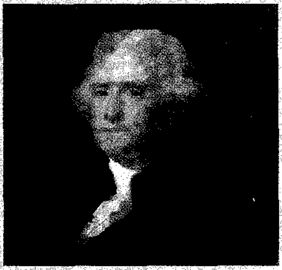
No kings. No magicians. No ladies of the lake. No singing swords.

But we did have a few knights in shining armor.



George Washington

Patrick Henry



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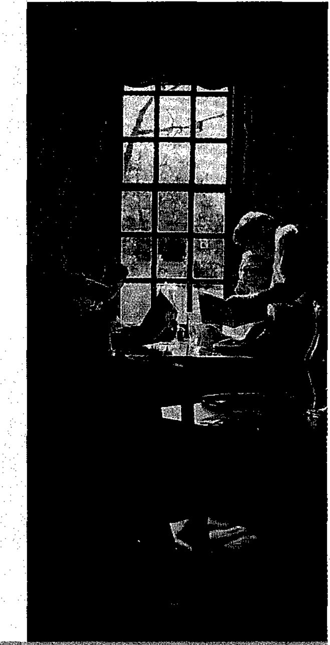

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member a mild shock at the absence of anything but air against my skin"—was cut, presumably because it violated the S.E.D.'s injunction against presenting "sexual innuendo." There is a guideline outlawing texts that "present inflammatory or highly controversial themes such as death, wars, abortion, or euthanasia, except where they are needed to meet test specifications," which explains the absence of the dramas of Shakespeare or the novels of Tolstoy from the Regents' library; and one prohibiting passages that "assume values not shared by all test takers," which renders heroic the Regents' ability to find any book at all that is fit for studying by high-school students.

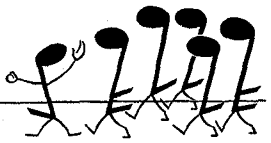
A long catalogue of censorious alterations has been compiled by Jeanne Heifetz, whose stepdaughter attends the Urban Academy Laboratory High School, on East Sixty-seventh Street, and who is the co-chair of a group called the Parents' Coalition to End High-Stakes Testing, which is lobbying to present alternatives to compulsory Regents exams. A passage from Annie Dillard's memoir "An American Childhood" refers to her visits to the public library but omits the fact that the library was in the "Negro section of town." Isaac Bashevis Singer's memoir "In My Father's Court" has been altered to avoid any reference to "Jews" or "Gentiles," which is rather like insuring that a restaurant menu makes no mention of the food on offer. (The author is, curiously, identified on the test merely as Isaac Singer; perhaps "Bashevis," a version of "Bathsheba," was too redolent of King David's seduction.) Fears of causing religious offense have led to the excision of even metaphorical invocations of things theological: Mortimer Adler, in a passage from the essay "How to Mark a Book," is not allowed to say of a painting or a statue, "Its soul, so to speak, is inseparable from its body"; and Edward Abbey, in "Desert Solitaire," cannot refer to a sky "as blue as the Virgin's cloak." And, per the Regents' veto of "gratuitous or overly graphic speech," Frank Conroy's boyhood friend is not allowed to exclaim "Hell," and has to say "Heck" instead.

It is not clear precisely which rules Chekhov broke; most likely, the Regents, alerted by the author's reference to "nakedness," unsettlingly endowed the act of strip-searching with a sexual-innuendo element. It is also possible, though, that students' unfamiliarity with the intricacies of a nineteenth-century Russian household violated another principle ("Does the material assume that the examinee has experience with a certain type of family structure?"); or, perhaps, that Chekhov's attitude toward the jewelry theft was insufficiently judgmental ("Does the material accept or fail to denounce criminal, illegal, or dangerous behavior?"). Chekhov was also of the opinion that "only he is an emancipated thinker who is not afraid to write foolish things," and the Regents, by scouring away every expression of insensitivity except literary insensitivity, have indeed demonstrated their Chekhovian emancipation.

—*Rebecca Mead*

NOT DEAD YET DEPT.

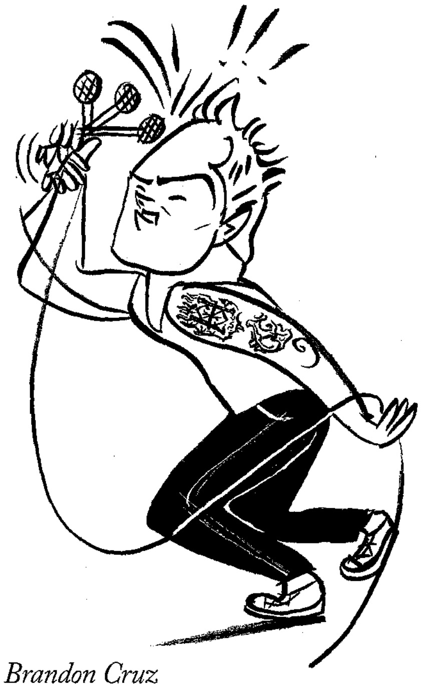
A PUNK REUNION



It has been twenty-three years since the Dead Kennedys released their first single, "California Über Alles" (which envisioned President Jerry Brown flanked by "the suede-denim secret police"), and since their singer, Jello Biafra, ran for mayor of San Francisco (his platform called for all downtown executives to wear clown suits during business hours) and came in fourth. And it has been sixteen years since the band broke up, after playing what was supposed to be its final show, in Davis, California. "We all agreed not to carry it on, but the thing about punk rock is, it's against having a set of rules, and here we are," East Bay Ray, the band's guitarist, said. This was the other night at L'Amour, a club in Brooklyn, where the DKs, touring for the first time since 1986, were about to play a midnight show. Their reunion is incomplete, however, as Jello has been estranged from the group since 1998, when Ray and the others—the bassist, Klaus Fluoride, and the drummer, D. H. Peligro—sued him for unpaid royalties and for the rights to license their music. (Biafra has accused them of wanting to let Levi's use the song "Holiday in Cambodia" in an ad. The band denies it.) In Jello's place, they have hired Brandon Cruz, who's on loan from a band called Dr. Know.

"My involvement is controversial, obviously," Brandon said, drinking a beer in an unfinished broom closet that was being used as the greenroom. "Now Jello is suing Dead Kennedys, accusing me of impersonating him and emulating his stage act. I've had death threats from fans. I've been called a scab and a trust-fund baby—because of my background, I guess." When Brandon was six years old, he began playing Eddie in "The Courtship of Eddie's Father," a sitcom that ran on ABC in the early nineteen-seventies and starred Bill Bixby as a widowed father. "Bixby was an amazing man," Brandon said. "In 1981, I did a Dick Clark special called 'Whatever Became of . . . ?,' and I showed up with green hair and he hugged me. He said, 'Are you on drugs?' and I said, 'No.' So I lied to Bill Bixby, but it was O.K."

Brandon, who has small eyes, tight skin, and short platinum hair, wanted to make it clear that, despite stories about Jello living in a large Victorian house in San Francisco while the rest of the DKs were going broke—Klaus had been driving a DHL truck—this tour is not just about money. He said, "I didn't write these lyrics, but I believe every fucking word of them."



Brandon Cruz

"Surprisingly, most of the lyrics don't feel dated, because so little has changed," said East Bay Ray, who, like the other original members of the band, doesn't like to give out his age or his real name. "We took a line that goes 'When Cowboy Ronnie comes to town,' and made it 'When Cowboy George W. Bush comes to town,' but that's about it."

Ray disappeared and returned with a man and his daughter. "They were waiting in the audience, and I saw she had one of our old T-shirts," he said. "Check out this story."

The man, whose name was David Schachter (brush cut, chinos), said, "O.K., I work in a conservative financial field, but imagine it's 1981 and I'm just a kid from Queens, right? I go to Irving Plaza to see the DKs on a Friday, and I love them so much I have to see them again the next night. But I feel guilty. What, go out on Saturday night and leave the wife at home? So I stay home awhile, I give the wife a little something to remember, and then I'm out the door and at the show. And, exactly nine months later, we get Lisa."

"Hey, wow," Brandon said.

"I didn't drag her to the show tonight," David said. "She loves your music. Tell them what album you've been listening to all week."

Lisa (newsboy cap, artillery belt, dark eye shadow) said, "Dead Kennedys."

"But which album," David said hopefully. "Fresh . . . Fruit . . . ?"

"Oh, right," Lisa said. " 'Fresh Fruit for Rotting Vegetables.' "

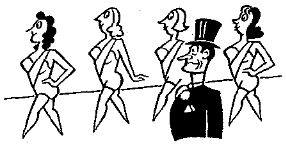
"Cool," Ray said.

When it was time to perform, the group tore through the old standards—including "Police Truck," "Let's Lynch the Landlord," and a slightly altered cover of "Viva Las Vegas" ("Lady Luck's with me, the dice stay hot/Got coke up my nose to dry away the snot"). Brandon kept rhythm by pounding his forehead with his microphone, drawing blood. When he introduced the number "Too Drunk to Fuck," he said, "Beer can do a lot of good things for you. But this song is about how bad things can happen to you, too." They finished the set with "Holiday in Cambodia," their best-known song, a satire of bourgeois slumming. The audience chanted along with the coda: "Pol Pot, Pol Pot, Pol Pot, Pol Pot."

Afterward, the Dead Kennedys headed out into the rain. Brandon put on a jean jacket with the sleeves cut off and used a paper towel to dab at his forehead, which was still bleeding. "One guy just told me, 'You're not Jello, but you're pretty good,' " he said. "That's O.K."

—*Eric Konigsberg*

THE BOARDS
AN EYE FOR LEADING LADIES



For close to three decades, Aubrey Reuben, a seventy-year-old high-school Spanish teacher turned freelance photographer, has brought his mercurial presence and automatic-focus camera to just about every opening-night party, testimonial dinner, and benefit gala in town. Reuben, who is a widower, almost never spends the evening at home. "I tried it once twenty-five years ago," he said. "And there was no Elizabeth Taylor, no Raquel Welch, no Jane Fonda—what was the point?" Reuben has a gentle-looking face, dominated by a long nose and a pair of large eyeglasses. He always wears a suit and tie. His slight frame carries the extra padding of thousands of catered dinners, but he is quick.

Two years ago, Tony Award Productions named Reuben to the nominating committee for its annual prizes, which were presented the other night at Radio City Music Hall. Based on a recent sighting at a lunch for this year's nominees at the Marriott Marquis Hotel, it can be reported that Reuben's newfound clout hasn't made him reticent or aloof. "I love what I do," he said. "You get to mingle, hug and kiss, enjoy delicious food, and shoot pictures of the stars."

After taking a snapshot of John Lithgow, who plays the gossip columnist J. J. Hunsecker in the musical version of "Sweet Smell of Success," Reuben darted over, thrust an eight-by-ten glossy at him, and said, "That's how you were years ago—I think it's from an opening-night party at Mr. Chow." Reuben believes that "everybody likes to get a photo." John Guare ("Sweet Smell of Success") got one of himself at an opening-night party at the West Bank Café. Mercedes Ruehl ("The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?") got one of herself backstage with Edward Albee. Elaine Stritch ("Elaine Stritch at Liberty") would have got one of herself at a recent Juvenile Diabetes Foundation dinner at the St. Regis Hotel, if only she had showed up at the lunch.

Reuben considers himself an expert at picking Tony winners, but he said that some of this year's races were too close to call, especially in the musical categories. Instead, he discussed a few theoretical awards, which have yet to be included in the official competition. First, Best Opening-Night Party for a Revival of a Musical, a field with only two contenders.

"Oklahoma!" (Tavern on the Green): "Josefina Gabrielle looked adorable—I'm sorry she didn't get nominated. I'd never met her before. Now I'm taking her to the ballet on Sunday night."

"Into the Woods" (Toys R Us): "The food was wonderful, and I think they actually sold some toys. Vanessa Williams and I, we've become bosom buddies—and, let me tell you, I like her bosom."

Reuben declared this category a tossup.

The Best Opening-Night Party for a Musical category was less competitive. Although Reuben thought that the parties for "Thoroughly Modern Millie" (the Marriott Marquis) and "Urinetown" (Laura Belle) were both wonderful, his definitive pick was "Sweet Smell of Success" (the Waldorf-Astoria). "They took over the whole ballroom, and an outer room as well," Reuben said, explaining his decision. "There was food all over, drink all over, everybody mingling and mixing—it was wonderful."

Reuben added that "Mamma Mia!" (Bryant Park Grill) would have run a close second, largely because he got to meet Louise Pitre, one of the show's stars, who was up for a Tony. "She's become a very good friend, I love her very much—and it's been Aubrey and Louise ever since," he said.

In the future, Reuben would like to see a new category added to the Tony Awards, one that honors the unclad female form. This year's nominees would have been Kathleen Turner ("The Graduate"), Jennifer Tilly ("The Women"), Kate Burton ("The Elephant Man"), and Kate Levering ("Thou Shalt Not"), all of whom appeared onstage naked or topless this season. "It would have been a four-way tie," Reuben said. "Everyone thinks I'm kidding, but let me tell you—hell no!"

—*Adam Green*

THE FINANCIAL PAGE
TURF WAR

In the nineteen-nineties, a tin-pot West Coast company turned itself, almost overnight, into an industry superpower, eclipsing incumbents and increasing its sales by two thousand per cent in four years. This company had nothing to do with microchips or with Silicon Valley. It made golf clubs. Ely Callaway, a former textile executive and vintner, had founded it in 1982, to amuse himself in his golden years. In 1991, Callaway Golf introduced the Big Bertha, a metal driver with a giant head, which made it much easier to hit the ball well, both for the duffer and for the pro. Soon every golf company was hawking high-tech clubs of its own, and Ely Callaway was being hailed as the Thomas Edison of the links. Meanwhile, Callaway kept making bigger Berthas, and by 1996 it was the largest golf-club manufacturer in the world.

A few years later, another West Coast company—Nike—decided that it wanted to take over the golf-equipment business. Nike started not with clubs but with balls. Sales of Nike's Precision Tour Accuracy ball took off once Tiger Woods began using it, in 2000. Then Nike unveiled a new line of clubs, which David Duval, one of the world's top pros, used in winning the British Open. Little wonder that the golf industry began quaking in its spikes.

But the Nike juggernaut shouldn't scare anyone. What you've got here is a novice company running up against one of the most competitive and technologically demanding industries in America. Nike may have deep pockets and snappy salesmen, but what Ely Callaway discovered a decade ago still holds: to dominate, you must innovate.

Nike itself is living proof of that principle, which might seem odd, since the company is widely considered the ultimate example of the power of branding. Logo-loathing lefties and brand-worshipping B-school grads may disagree on most things, but they share the misconception that Nike rose to prominence solely on the basis of clever marketing and the mystical allure of the swoosh. Actually, Nike, like Callaway, was built on technological innovation, not marketing tricks.

In the seventies, Nike was an up-and-coming manufacturer of running shoes. The market was still small, and it was dominated by Adidas. But Nike had the waffle sole, which its co-founder, Bill Bowerman, the track coach at the University of Oregon, had invented (so the story goes) by pouring urethane rubber over a waffle iron. The waffle sole made Nikes lighter and gave them better traction. Then, in 1979, just as the popularity of jogging was exploding, the company introduced the Tailwind, which featured Nike's patented Air system—a bubble sealed in the polyurethane of the sole, to cushion the foot. Nike never looked back.

CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

Around the same time, Nike took up basketball. In the mid-seventies, there was basically one basketball-shoe company in America, Converse, and it had been on top for so long that it was ill-prepared to deal with a serious challenge. Its meagre R. & D. budget left it helpless in the face of Nike's blend of science and fashion. Within a few years, thanks to Air technology, Nike owned the court. A man named Michael Jordan may have had a little bit to do with this, but the fact is that Nike was outselling its competitors well before anyone had ever uttered the phrase "Air Jordan."

That was a long time ago, but even today running and basketball are Nike's biggest lines. The company has done a superb job of using marketing to entrench the dominance that technology gave it. But as Nike has tried to extend its reach into other markets—skateboard shoes, hiking boots, rowing machines—it has learned that the swoosh alone just won't do it. When it ventured into soccer, it had a smart ad campaign and big-name endorsements. But it also had a poor product—a notoriously flawed soccer shoe, which caused the company to waste time and money catching up. After spending hundreds of millions of dollars on marketing, the company still lags well behind Adidas. As for golf, Nike's Tour Accuracy was a perfectly respectable ball, but it lacked the technological edge of the Big Bertha or the Tailwind. (The pace of innovation, or supposed innovation, in the golf business has become ruthless; even Callaway eventually stumbled trying to keep up with the arms race that it helped create.) Sales of the Tour Accuracy stalled, while a new, souped-up ball from Titleist, the Pro V1, became one of the great product launches, in any industry, in recent memory.

Of course, Nike is powerful enough to muscle its way into any market it chooses. (If Nike started selling light bulbs, someone would buy them.) But Nike isn't powerful enough both to muscle in and to make a lot of money doing so. In the past five years, Nike has added three billion dollars in sales but less than forty million dollars in actual profit, and its return on equity has fallen sharply, which may explain why its stock price has stagnated.

The marketing evangelists preach that, once you've established a brand, all you have to do is slap it on a sweatshirt or a little white dimpled ball and you're in the money. More often than not, though, brand extensions fail. Nike golf clubs may not be as dubious as Coca-Cola jeans or Virgin railways, but the prospects for success aren't much better. Where modern marketers have succeeded, wildly, is in selling us on the idea that marketing is all you need. The numbers suggest a different, homier lesson. The surest way to get stronger sales is to sell a stronger product.

—*James Surowiecki*

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ANNALS OF LAW

THE DRIVER

Did the prosecutors in the Louima case have the right man all along?

BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

In 1999, a police officer named Charles Schwarz was convicted of participating in one of the most notorious crimes in recent New York history. A jury in Brooklyn federal court found that Schwarz had assisted in the sexual assault of Abner Louima, a Haitian immigrant, in the bathroom of a station house in Brooklyn. (During the trial, another officer, Justin Volpe, had pleaded guilty to the assault itself, which took place on August 9, 1997.) The Louima case probably marked the lowest moment of the Giuliani years—a grotesque abuse of a black man by two white cops.

Earlier this spring, the Court of Appeals reversed Schwarz's convictions, and the reaction to the decision demonstrated just how much the atmosphere around the case had changed. The three tabloids—the *News*, *Newsday*, and the *Post*—celebrated Schwarz's release with similar front-page headlines: "FREE," "HE'S HOME," and "HE'S OUT." The *Times* welcomed Schwarz's return to his mother's home on Staten Island with a dewy portrait. "The second thing Charles Schwarz did on his first full day out of prison was shower," the article, by Alan Feuer, began. "His hands were not shackled on the way to the tub." The first thing Schwarz did, according to the article, was "open his eyes . . . lingering in bed. . . . He could sleep as long as he wanted. And that felt best of all."

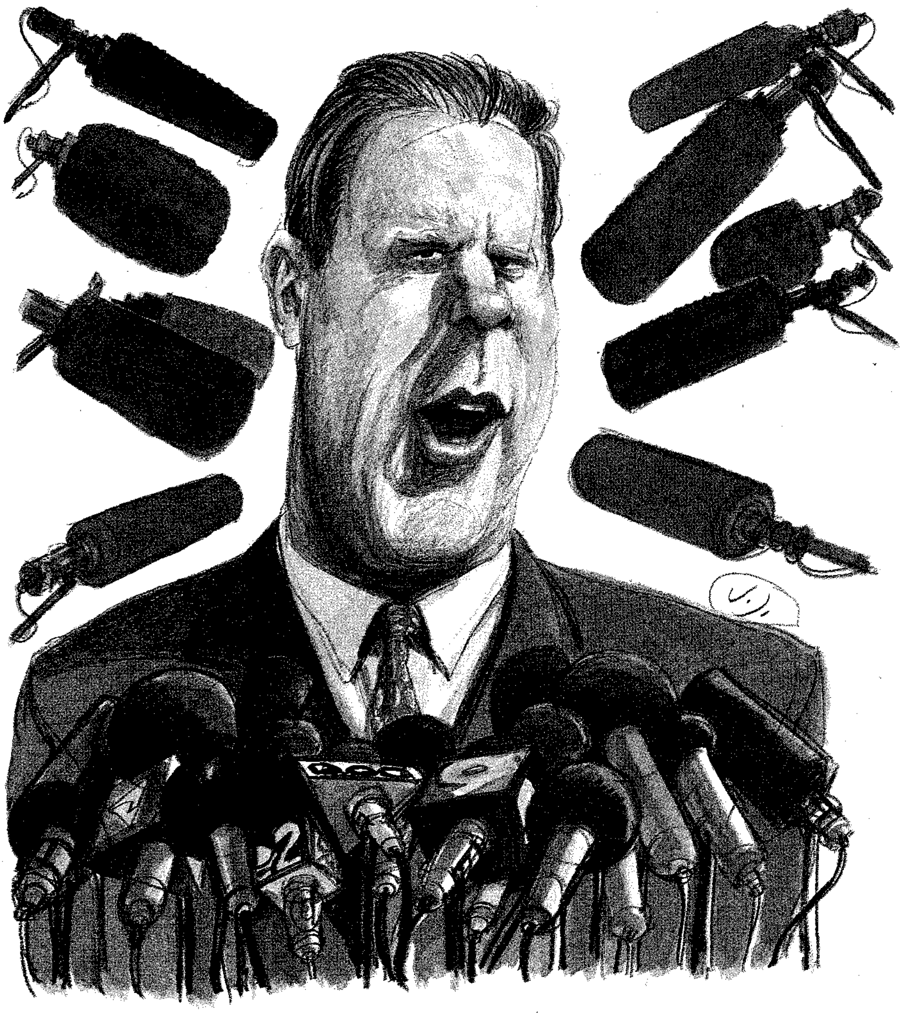
The story of Charles Schwarz belongs to a suddenly distant era, when the public image of New York police officers was shaped largely by their fraught relations with the city's racial minorities rather than by their heroics on September 11th. In part, Schwarz had the good fortune to be caught up in the slipstream of the city's renewed appreciation for its police force, but, more important, he was the beneficiary of the indefatigable, and largely unrefuted, efforts of a pro-bono attorney, a newspaper columnist, and a steadfast wife. Through their work, Schwarz's incarceration seemed to reflect the sensibilities of a bygone age. The only problem with this tidy resolution to the story is that Schwarz faces a retrial in Brooklyn, where jury selection begins on June 3rd. And the available evidence in the case suggests that he may well be convicted again.

At the age of thirty-six, despite almost three years in prison, Charles Schwarz carries his beefy six-foot-one-inch frame with a confident swagger. I talked with Schwarz and his wife, Andra, in the midtown office of his lawyer, Ronald P. Fischetti, one recent Friday afternoon. Each played a distinct role in their real-life ensemble cast: Chuck was the stoic hero, Andra the adoring helpmate, Ron the sarcastic wise guy.

Schwarz's mother was a nurse, his father a train conductor and brakeman who died when Chuck was a teen-ager. After graduating from high school, in 1983, he enlisted in the Marines, where he was, as he told me, "promoted meritoriously to corporal." Schwarz went on, "Being a marine is not just a statement. I belonged to what I believe is the finest military organization in the world." Honorably discharged in 1988, he joined the police force the following year. "It was sort of an extension of the Marine Corps, being a police officer—the sense of camaraderie," Schwarz told me. "Having a military background, it just seemed like a typical progression."

Schwarz described his life as a passage from one team to another—high-school football squad, Marine Corps, police force, anti-crime precinct unit. The worlds that Schwarz has chosen have been men's clubs in varying forms, and he has the unnerving habit of ignoring whatever his wife says and continuing to talk without acknowledging that Andra has even spoken. Schwarz remains adamant about his innocence and appears astonished that he must defend himself once more. "They're making me out to be a sex offender," he said. "There's nothing worse than making me a sex offender. Just think what that does to you. It takes a whole lifetime to build a reputation. Within a matter of minutes, my whole life came to a crashing halt." He has no job, and Andra long ago quit her position as a paralegal to work full time on his defense. They often care for Chuck's brother, John, who became a quadriplegic after a swimming-pool accident. Chuck and Andra sold their house for living expenses and are now staying with relatives.

Schwarz speaks candidly about the despair he felt in prison. "You have your highs and lows, most of them lows," he said. "I would call Ron's office as much as possible, because talking to him would raise my spirits." Fischetti smiled and said to his client, "And you remember what I would say to you? 'Be a fucking marine. Stand up tall. Don't worry. We're going to get you out.' " At last, Schwarz has caught up with Fischetti's confidence. "I feel very good going into this trial," he told me. "The climate has changed. There is not such an anti-police sentiment out there. Now a lot more facts about my case are public."



Charles Schwarz benefitted from the city's renewed appreciation for its police force.

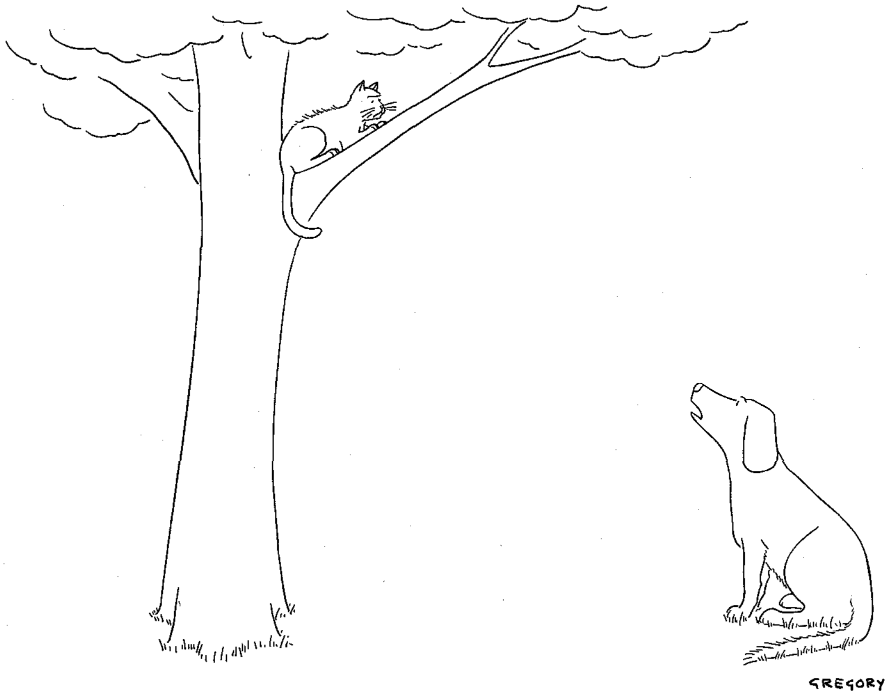
VICTOR JUHASZ

Ron Fischetti's mission has been to make those "facts" public. Fischetti has been among the top criminal-defense attorneys in New York for a generation. At sixty-six, his ruddy face has a glow that looks not so much weathered by time as burnished by prosperity. He grew up in Brooklyn and went to night law school at St. John's, in Queens, graduating in 1961, "in the top ten per cent of the bottom third of my class," he says. He spent the early years of his career as a functionary of the Brooklyn Democratic machine and only came to trial work in 1974, when he helped defend Representative Bertram Podell in a federal corruption case. Fischetti lost that one to Rudolph Giuliani, then a young federal prosecutor, but he soon built a thriving practice, first as a Mob lawyer, representing Gene Gotti (John's younger brother), among others, and then toiling in the more genteel precincts of white-collar crime. Today, Fischetti lives in Greenwich, Connecticut, and plays golf on the storied links of Winged Foot.

Before a recent hearing in the Schwarz case, Fischetti positioned himself before the dozen or so reporters in the gallery and gave a weary shrug. "I can't take this anymore," he announced as he perched on the wooden barrier to the well of the courtroom. "No more innocent clients after this one. Usually, you try a case, you win, you lose—whatever happens, you go out for a drink and then you come back to work tomorrow. But this? This I can't take anymore. No more innocent clients for me." This speech, which Fischetti has given in various forms throughout the three years he has represented Schwarz, amounts to a kind of jujitsu move to leverage his reputation. Sure, I'm usually a cynical hired gun, he says, but not this time. He'd never try to sell Gene Gotti's innocence this way. "I am not a 'cause' lawyer," Fischetti told me later. "But this is my cause."

In front of Fischetti sat Steve Dunleavy, the *Post* columnist who has championed Schwarz's innocence in more than fifty columns during the past few years. Now sixty-four years old, Dunleavy moved to New York in the nineteen-sixties, but he still sounds as if he had just stepped off the plane from his native Australia. A veteran of every form of tabloid journalism—his pompadour was once a familiar sight on "A Current Affair"—Dunleavy has worked for the *Post* on and off for about two decades. Known both for his nicotine rasp and for his lunchtime vodka-and-tonics, Dunleavy recalls an earlier day in New York journalism, and he has made Schwarz the focus of an old-fashioned crusade.

Dunleavy generally ignores the details of the case, writing instead as if Schwarz's status as "the most innocent man in America" were a given. Most of Dunleavy's pieces concern such things as the toll on Schwarz's family, the unfairness of his trials, and "this bizarre federal prosecutor (read that persecutor) Alan Vinegrad." (I knew Vinegrad when I worked as a prosecutor in Brooklyn, in the early nineties.) By Dunleavy's own admission, he has a reflexive sympathy for police officers, and in the Louima case that sentiment initially extended to Justin Volpe. "I'm the first to admit that I didn't even believe



"O.K., here's the deal—I'll stop chasing you if you agree to become a dog."

• •

that Volpe was involved. I didn't believe it happened at all," Dunleavy told me. But after Volpe pleaded guilty Dunleavy's passion for Schwarz's cause doubled.

As we talked on April 3rd, before Judge Reena Raggi took the bench, Dunleavy noted with some satisfaction that his campaign for Schwarz seemed to have made inroads into public opinion. He pointed out that earlier court hearings had drawn throngs of protesters to the courthouse, but on this day only a single man came out to taunt the defendant. Since September 11th, many of the police department's former antagonists, even the Reverend Al Sharpton, have moved on to other causes. "They gave a war, and no one's coming anymore," Dunleavy told me. "The public at large now accepts that this case against Chuck is a bullshit story."

On Friday night, August 8, 1997, Abner Louima, a thirty-year-old naturalized citizen from Haiti with no criminal record, went out with a group of friends to Club Rendezvous, a night club on Flatbush Avenue, in Brooklyn. When the club was closing, at about 4 A.M., there was a disturbance on the sidewalk involving other customers, and police officers from the Seventieth Precinct responded, among them Justin Volpe and his partner, Thomas Bruder, and Thomas Wiese and his partner, Charles Schwarz.

Shortly after the officers arrived, Volpe got into a confrontation with John Rejouis, a black off-duty New York City corrections officer. Rejouis tried to show his badge to Volpe, who slapped it out of his hand and pushed him. The crowd, including Louima, reacted indignantly to Volpe's treatment of Rejouis, and Schwarz and Wiese, assisted by Officers Eric Turetzky and Mark Schofield, subdued Louima and placed him in handcuffs. At just about this time, Louima's cousin Jay Nicholas ran up and punched Officer Volpe in the side of the head. Volpe and several other officers chased Nicholas, but he was never caught.

Schwarz drove Louima toward the Seventieth Precinct station house for booking; his partner, Wiese, sat in the passenger seat. En route, they heard a description of Volpe's assailant broadcast over the police radio. The description matched Louima (even though it was Nicholas who had attacked Volpe), and Wiese radioed that they had in custody the man who had punched Volpe.

At about 4:35 A.M., Louima arrived at the station house, and the critical events began to unfold. From the start, Louima was treated not as an ordinary prisoner but, rather, as someone who had assaulted a cop and thus needed to be taught a lesson. For Schwarz and his colleagues, the precinct cops were a team, and they had to stick together. After Schwarz and Wiese brought Louima to the front desk, Schwarz searched Louima, then took his booking information. During this process, Louima's pants and underwear dropped to his knees, and no one helped pick them up.

Volpe separately returned to the seven-oh, as the precinct is known, and prepared for his assault. He broke the wooden handle off of a broom and borrowed a pair of leather gloves from another officer. After Schwarz finished Louima's paperwork, the sergeant on duty ordered Schwarz to place Louima in a holding cell in the back of the station house. Louima was then taken to the back of the building, but instead of going to the holding cells he was escorted down a different corridor, to a bathroom.

Who took Louima to the bathroom? To this day, that remains the central issue in the case. As investigators began piecing the story together in the days after the attack, they heard from Officer Turetzky, who was present at the Club Rendezvous melee, that he saw Schwarz take Louima down the corridor toward the bathroom. Officer Schofield likewise said that he saw Schwarz walk Louima toward the back of the precinct. Louima has repeatedly asserted that the officer who led him was the "driver" of the police car—Charles Schwarz.

Volpe followed the "driver" and Louima into the bathroom and warned Louima that he would kill him if he told anyone about what he was going to do. When Louima yelled, the "driver" put his foot on his mouth and told him to shut up. The "driver" then lifted Louima by his handcuffs and Volpe rammed the broom handle into Louima's rectum, rupturing his bladder and rectum. (The attack led to massive internal injuries, causing Louima to be given a colostomy bag to let him defecate and a cystostomy tube to help him urinate.) Volpe put the broom handle in front of Louima's face. "That's your shit," he said. His pants still around his knees, Louima was then taken to a holding cell. In his initial recounting of the attack, Louima told investigators that he had been assaulted with a toilet plunger. It turned out that Louima was mistaken about the weapon, but he had given the attack its macabre symbol.

On May 4, 1999, Volpe and Schwarz went on trial in Brooklyn federal court on charges of violating Abner Louima's civil rights by sexually assaulting him. The evidence against Volpe was overwhelming. Not only had Louima identified Volpe as his principal assailant but Volpe had boasted to several other officers that he had "broken" the prisoner who had (he thought) punched him on the street. In the middle of the trial, on May 25th, Volpe suddenly decided to plead guilty. The guilty plea at that moment was an inexplicable legal strategy for Volpe, who got no credit for sparing the government a trial, and was sentenced to thirty years in prison. As for his accomplices, during his guilty plea Volpe told Judge Eugene H. Nickerson, who was presiding over the case, that he had assaulted Louima with "another" officer present, whom he did not name.

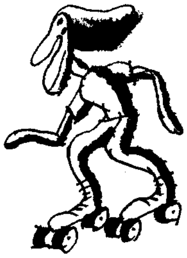
The jury trial continued, with Schwarz as the only defendant on the sexual-assault charges. At that time, Schwarz was represented by Stephen Worth, a veteran attorney who specializes in defending police officers. (Worth won an acquittal for one of the four police officers who shot Amadou Diallo to death on his doorstep in the Bronx on February 4, 1999.) During pretrial proceedings before Judge Nickerson, Worth had struggled to find a way for the jury to hear Officer Thomas Wiese's most recent account of the night in question.

Wiese's story had evolved over time. When he first described his role, just a few days after the assault, he told a representative of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, the police union, that he and Schwarz were at the front desk during Volpe's attack on Louima. At that point, Wiese said he knew nothing about what happened to Louima. But by August 17th Eric Turetzky had become the first officer to break the blue wall of silence and had identified Schwarz as the cop who walked Louima toward the bathroom. On that day, Wiese told a very different story to an investigator from the Brooklyn district attorney's office, managing to exculpate his partner without admitting any wrongdoing on his own part. Wiese said that he, not Schwarz, had accompanied Louima. Volpe, Wiese said, had told him that he wanted to take Louima into the bathroom to "clean up," so Wiese waited for them outside. As Volpe tortured Louima, Wiese said he heard nothing except some banging noises. Indeed, Wiese said that he spent the time playing with a puppy named Midnight, whom officers in the precinct had adopted. After a few minutes, Wiese and the dog entered the bathroom and discovered Louima writhing in agony on the floor. As far as Wiese knew, Schwarz was at the front desk during the attack.

Wiese's tale was unconvincing. No witnesses testified that they saw Wiese take Louima to the bathroom, and it was hard to believe that anyone could obliviously play with a dog while a man was tortured a few feet away. Still, Wiese's story was probably the best evidence that Worth had on Schwarz's behalf. The prosecutors believed that Wiese's entire story was false and charged him with conspiring to obstruct justice; Wiese, taking the Fifth during the trial to protect himself, couldn't testify for his former partner. Worth asked Judge Nickerson to admit Wiese's statement to investigators under a variety of legal theories, but the Judge refused, calling Wiese's version inadmissible hearsay. In the end, the jury did not hear Wiese's account.

Worth excoriated Louima for a lie he told investigators in the first days after the attack: that the cops who brutalized him had said, "There is no more Dinkins administration—it's Giuliani time." (Louima said he had invented the comment at the suggestion of a family adviser, who feared that the attack would otherwise be ignored.) In a dramatic high point, Worth had Schwarz stand up in the courtroom and asked Louima if this was the man who held him while Volpe brutalized him. Louima could not say for sure, insisting only that the second man in the bathroom was the "driver" of the patrol car.

After Volpe pleaded guilty, Worth faced a difficult tactical decision. Should he call Volpe as a witness for Schwarz? At that point, Worth didn't know Volpe would testify that it was Wiese, not Schwarz, who had been in the bathroom. (Volpe's lawyer, Marvyn Kornberg, and Worth detested each other, and there was little communication between them.) Even if Volpe would exculpate Schwarz, it wasn't clear that the jury would believe him. In the end, Worth did not call Volpe to the stand. On June 8, 1999, the jury convicted Schwarz of conspiring to violate, and of violating, Louima's civil rights by assaulting him in the bathroom of the Seventieth Precinct.



Andra Schwarz was distraught at her husband's conviction. A petite, determined woman, who often wears "Free Chuck Schwarz" T-shirts around Fischetti's office as she assists in the defense, Andra was working as a paralegal in a midtown firm when her husband was arrested. "We thought we would need an appeals person, a new-trial person, and as we were getting names from people Ron's name kept coming up," she told me. Fischetti's buoyant confidence captivated both Andra and her husband, who had been remanded to the Metropolitan Correctional Center, in downtown Manhattan. Fischetti read the transcript of the trial, sized up his potential client, and took the case pro bono.

Fischetti decided that he had to change minds about the facts on which the jury had convicted Schwarz, so he went to work on the press. "There was no way to get this case reversed unless the Circuit Court of Appeals had some doubt as to his guilt," Fischetti told me. "You had to convince the bench that maybe an innocent man was convicted because of the nature of the crime. When we started, he was seen as almost worse than Volpe. Chuck had his foot on his neck. I think the guy that holds him down is almost worse. We had to turn that attitude around. So I spent a lot of time with reporters." Dunleavy, with his noted affinity for the police, was the easiest reporter to recruit, and he began writing about the case regularly when Fischetti took over. Schwarz had a new quarterback for his legal team.

The first turning point in public perception came when Craig Horowitz wrote a five-thousand-word cover story about the case for *New York*, on October 25, 1999. In the article, Horowitz wrote that "in the four months since the verdict was delivered, compelling doubts have been raised about Schwarz's participation in the crime." According to Horowitz, "the jury never got to hear critical information that plainly suggests another version of what happened"; namely, Volpe's and Wiese's descriptions of what went on in the bathroom. This was true; the jury had not heard Volpe's or Wiese's version. And the article did raise provocative questions about the case: What if Volpe had testified? What if the jury had heard Wiese's statement? What if Schwarz had taken the stand in his own defense? What if Schwarz had had a better lawyer? As it turned out, those questions would all have specific answers.

After the cops were first indicted, Judge Nickerson divided the case into two trials. In the first, Volpe had pleaded guilty and Schwarz had been convicted of the assault on Louima. But there would then be a second trial, where Schwarz, his partner, Thomas Wiese, and Volpe's partner, Thomas Bruder, would face charges that they had conspired to obstruct the federal investigation by lying about Schwarz's role in the attack on Louima. The issues in the two trials were not identical, but they were very similar, and most of the same witnesses would reprise their testimony. Once again, if the jurors believed that Schwarz had never been in the bathroom with Louima, they would have no choice but to acquit him. With Ron Fischetti at the helm, Chuck Schwarz would have another chance at vindication.

This trial, about whether the cops had blocked the investigation of the assault on Louima, which began in Brooklyn on February 7, 2000, focussed more on the reactions of the police officers involved than on the details of the attack itself. But the theme was the same: these officers would protect their own—whether from a man who they thought had hit a cop on a sidewalk or from the investigators who they knew were drawing close. As the Internal Affairs Bureau of the police and, later, the F.B.I. began asking questions, during the week after the attack, Schwarz, Wiese, and Bruder telephoned one another fifty-five times. Schwarz and Wiese spoke to each other thirty-seven times. During those same few post-attack days, Schwarz also repeatedly sought advice from Anthony Abbate, a disgraced former cop whom the N.Y.P.D. had fired in 1996 for a series of disciplinary infractions. In all, prosecutors argued, the trial was a case study in the blue wall. "The torture in this case is committed by people who are aberrations. That kind of abuse is never going to happen very often," Peter Neufeld, one of Louima's civil lawyers, said. "The real crime is how many people are willing to cover up. In the more routine type of brutality, people will lie—that's a more systemic problem."

The second trial gave Fischetti the chance to learn from Schwarz's unsuccessful defense in the first. Fischetti called Volpe, who testified that it was Wiese, not Schwarz, who witnessed the assault; the jury also heard Wiese's statement that he had been playing with the puppy during the assault and that Schwarz was nowhere near the bathroom. And this time Schwarz testified in his own defense. Wiese had originally said that he and Schwarz were at the front desk when Volpe attacked Louima. This presented a problem for Schwarz because none of the officers remembered seeing him there at the time of the attack. If Schwarz wasn't at the front desk and he wasn't in the bathroom, where was he? In his testimony, Schwarz tried to finesse this problem by saying that during that time he happened to go out to search his patrol car, to see if anything had been left behind.

The jurors' verdict in the second trial showed what they thought of Schwarz's story. On March 6, 2000, he was found guilty of conspiring to obstruct justice, and Wiese and Bruder were convicted as well. In his column the next day, Dunleavy wrote, "What happened on the sixth floor in a so-called palace of justice called the Brooklyn Federal Courthouse yesterday was an abortion." For his convictions in the two trials, Schwarz was sentenced to a hundred and eighty-eight months in prison. Wiese and Bruder received five-year sentences.

Fischetti, undeterred, started working on two tracks. His media offensive continued, this time focussing on reporters who had not covered either of Schwarz's trials. Fischetti presented his client's case to "60 Minutes" and to Bob Herbert, an Op-Ed columnist for the *Times*. Ed Bradley's story, broadcast on February 18, 2001, featured interviews with Schwarz, Wiese, and Bruder, as well as with several jurors from the first trial, who said they would not have voted to convict Schwarz if they had known that Volpe would testify that Schwarz never entered the bathroom. The story noted that Bruder was "absolutely" sure that it was not Schwarz who took Louima to the bathroom; that Turetzky was unsure whether it was Schwarz or Wiese who walked Louima out of the bathroom; and, finally, that Schwarz and Wiese resembled each other. Citing the "60 Minutes" segment, Herbert argued, "It appears very likely that one of the imprisoned police officers—Charles Schwarz, who is serving 15 years in a federal penitentiary—did not participate in the attack." Of course, Dunleavy never relented on "the lynching of this former Marine, great cop and wonderful husband."

Fischetti's other strategy led to the Court of Appeals. In a typical bravura touch, Fischetti and the appellate specialist Diarmuid White called the first point in their brief "The Imprisonment of Charles Schwarz Is a Denial of Due Process Because He Is Actually Innocent." As Fischetti cheerfully acknowledged to me, he knew he shouldn't be making this kind of argument to the Court of Appeals. Appellate judges are only supposed to consider interpretations of law, not second-guess the factual decisions made by jurors. "I knew we weren't going to win on that ground," Fischetti told me. "But we had to keep telling them, 'You got the wrong guy here. He wasn't in that bathroom.'" Fischetti's other primary arguments were more technical—that prosecutors had removed too many white jurors, and that they had withheld exculpatory information from the defense. The three-judge panel heard arguments in the case on July 19, 2001, and issued its ruling almost eight months later, on February 28, 2002.

The decision stunned everyone on both sides of the case. The judges—John M. Walker, Jr., Jose A. Cabranes, and Chester J. Straub—reversed Schwarz's conviction in the assault case because his lawyer in the first trial, Stephen Worth, had an unwaivable conflict of interest. It was a huge victory for Schwarz, even if the opinion said nothing about whether he was guilty or innocent. Before the first trial, the prosecutor, Vinegrad, had informed Judge Nickerson that Stephen Worth's firm had a contract to represent the police union, the P.B.A. Because of this potential conflict of interest—Louima was suing the P.B.A. as well as the city for money damages in a separate civil case—Vinegrad said that Nickerson should address whether Worth could still represent Schwarz. Worth had protested vehemently, arguing that there was no real conflict and that his removal would deny Schwarz his right, under the Sixth Amendment, to the counsel of his choice. To resolve the issue, Nickerson appointed a separate lawyer to advise Schwarz. After a hearing, Schwarz decided that he wanted to stay with Worth. "I'm fully aware of the conflicts," he told the Judge. "I also understand there are no do-overs with this case. Once I make my decision that's it." Nickerson allowed Worth to remain on the case.

At the oral argument of the appeal, none of the three judges asked a single question about the conflict-of-interest issue. This was not surprising, because reversals based on attorney conflicts are extremely rare, especially when the trial judge airs the decision fully at the beginning of the case, as Nickerson did here. Yet, according to Judge Walker, the conflict was so obvious and so pernicious that Worth could not possibly have adequately represented Schwarz, even though Schwarz had known about the conflict. The Appeals Court therefore granted Schwarz a new trial. The court also dismissed the federal obstruction-of-justice convictions against all three defendants, because the evidence showed only that they may have obstructed a state investigation by the Brooklyn district attorney, not a federal grand-jury investigation. Such highly technical grounds for reversals persuaded partisans on both sides of the case that something else was at work besides the judges' stated rationale. "They just didn't like the case," one lawyer said. After thirty-three months in prison, Schwarz would get his do-over after all.

It is risky to predict the outcome of a third trial. At a recent pretrial hearing, Judge Raggi, who took over the case after the death of Eugene Nickerson earlier this year, said, "Many different versions of this incident have been told by different witnesses and sometimes by the same witnesses." Louima has now described the attack so many times that there are inconsistencies in his account. Indeed, Judge Raggi recently ruled that Vinegrad should have disclosed earlier that Louima's family adviser quoted Louima as once saying that four officers had attacked him in the bathroom. (Louima denies ever saying this.) Other government witnesses have problems, too. Turetzky has changed details—about such things as whether Louima was on Schwarz's left or right as they went toward the bathroom. Schofield, the other cop who says that Schwarz walked Louima toward the back of the precinct, took some time to come forward and has told a questionable story about how Volpe came to use Schofield's gloves in the attack. Fischetti has hinted that more damaging information will emerge about the prosecution's witnesses.

As much as the public has embraced the police force, there have been few changes in the system that gave rise to the Louima case and coverup. Louima settled his civil lawsuit against the city and the P.B.A. for $8.75 million and moved to Florida. In an apparently unprecedented part of the settlement, the P.B.A. paid $1.625 million toward the total award. The P.B.A. has taken some modest steps to prevent potential conflicts of interest among lawyers when police officers come under official scrutiny. But the union's sympathies remain with Schwarz; the P.B.A.'s Web site links to Freeschwarz.com. After all this time, the teams that have meant the most to Schwarz—the P.B.A., which stood by him, the precinct cops who testified for him, the legal team that took on every challenge—have kept up the fight.

The campaign for Schwarz stands as a model of media-age advocacy, one that has little to do with the facts of the case. The Court of Appeals relied on arcane legalisms. Dunleavy used invective and assertion. After Vinegrad obtained a new indictment against Schwarz for perjury, based on his testimony in the second trial, Dunleavy took to calling the courthouse "the Vinegrad Villa of the Vicious." Nat Hentoff, in the *Village Voice*, compared Vinegrad to Javert, of "Les Misérables"—"the very model of a relentless, mean-spirited prosecutor." The fact that juries had twice found Schwarz guilty dwindled to the status of a footnote at best.

The transformation in public perception seems to have convinced Schwarz that he is now the real victim in this case. "He suffered a horrible crime. Nobody deserves what happened to him," Schwarz said to me about Louima. "I understand that we both have suffered." ♦

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THE SPORTING SCENE

ABSENT WITHOUT LEAVE

If you hook a shad but don't land him, whose fault is it?

BY JOHN McPHEE

In stocking waders and cleated boots, I am standing in a clump of bushes that spend most of the year far out of water. Not to mention the trees. The water comes up to my waist. If I were to step a wee bit farther out, cops would pick up the body in Trenton. The river here is only one or two hundred feet wide, and the number of cubic feet per second going by is six times normal. If you like, you could call it a flood, but the Delaware has cut such a deep gorge into the Pocono-Catskill plateau that the water is not pooling out all over the countryside but is concentrated in a silt-laden flume of what appears to be hurtling cement. All the sane people have long since quit and gone home. Stick around. There's a challenge present. The fish are in the river, where else? They're just as unhappy as you are. Out from the water's edge, they can't go much farther than you can.

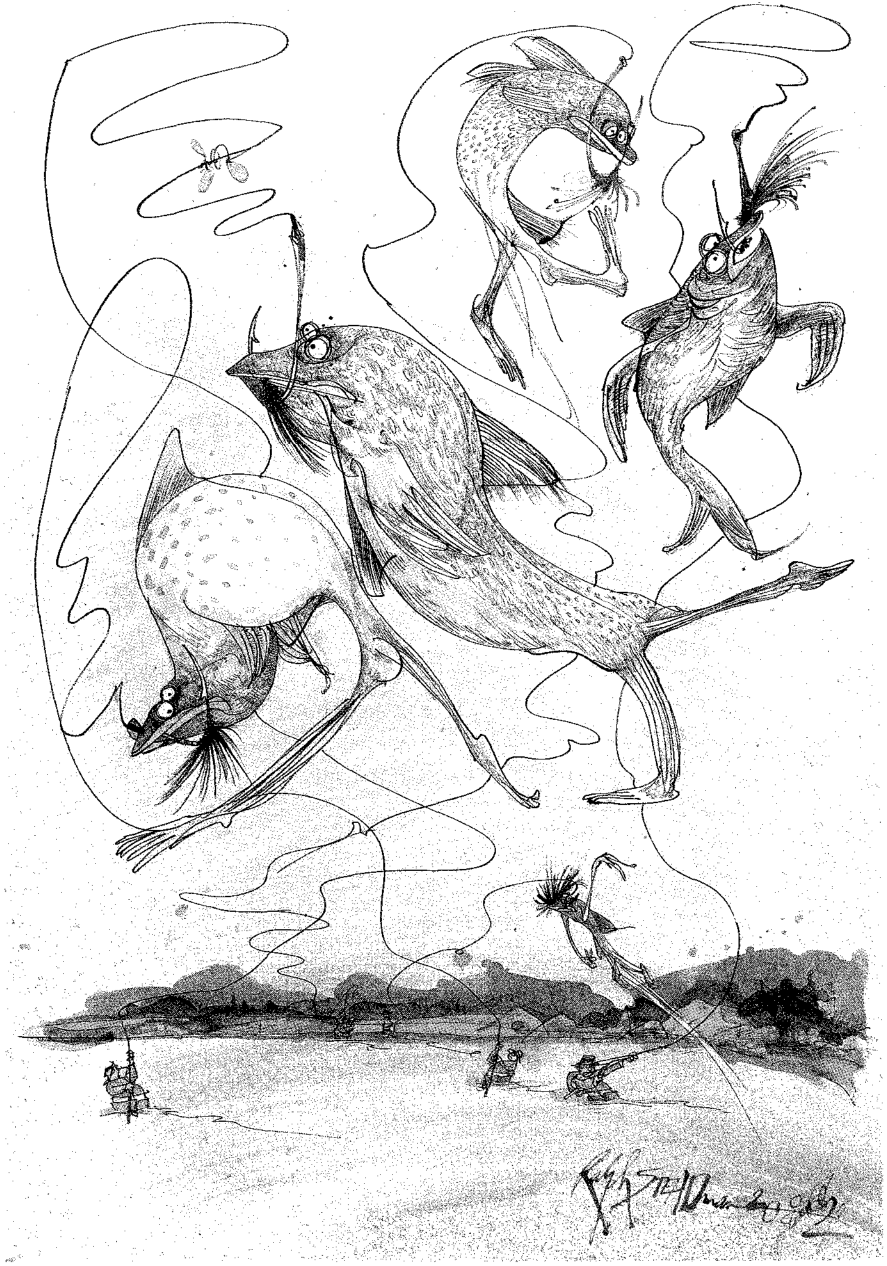
Toss into the river a twig or a leaf or anything else that floats. Watch it go. If there is some kind of eddy, it will find it. Cast a bright dart into the big current so that it swings into the seam of the eddy. Do not be discouraged by the fact that deer have been known to sleep where you are fishing. This situation is extremely marginal, and you will not have a banner day, but one fish caught under these conditions is worth sixteen in a low river with big schools. A guy in Hankins told me that high turbid water, within reason, "can even be good for shad"—from the angler's point of view. They hit the darts more readily, he claimed, than they do in low, clear water. A local newspaper described fishermen using weighted flies for shad near the edge of the swollen river. There are things to be said for catching fish in a forest. The dart swings out of the brown-and-white turbulence into the haven shallows. Suddenly the line sticks fast to a five-pound-two-ounce roe.

An entry from my fishing diaries:

> May 22: Was out on a rock in the afternoon, the river down and clear. The event of the day was a weird, deceptive snag. It felt like river-bottom monofilament—the lost fishing line, mine and others', that all of us so often get hung up on. It's like a bungee with your hook in it. Snags of one kind and another are routine in shad fishing because you generally fish along the bottom. I tugged at this one, and dragged it a little, hoping not to snap my rod. The burden at the far end kept coming—a slow, elastic dead weight. Then the line came up like a blade through the water and the surface of the river burst open. A roe shad the size of a blimp jumped and soared two feet in the air. Simultaneously, the dart came free. That huge roe shad had been sulking on the hook the way salmon do. Indisputably, she was the biggest shad anywhere in the river. I am off the mark, of course, in comparing her to a blimp. She was more like the Hindenburg. Beware. Nine snags will be snags, but the tenth will have a caudal fin.

An AWOL is a shad absent without leave. AWOLs in shad fishing are numerous and inevitable and deserve to be in the statistics. They are shad that hook up and later get away—the ten-second shad, the ten-minute shad. Solidly, the fish hits the lure; and completely it gets away. How it gets away is the nature of the AWOL. Many are the result of very light hookings, and most hookings are very light—nicks in the front of the mouth.

After a time, the hook pulls loose, and that is routine shad fishing. That is what it's like. Fish on the line are by no means halfway home. Most of all, the shad you hook but don't land are a part of your season—the hooking being in some ways more significant than the netting. In one ten-year span, I hooked up with a little over a thousand shad, and lost two hundred and ninety-eight. Roughly one in three. Most that get away are no-fault AWOLs. For example, the planer AWOL. Far out on the line, the shad comes to the river surface lying on one side. This is no spent shad. It skitters like a surfboard on the top of the river. There is nothing



Little buck shad invite error. They lack character, dimension, determination, and eggs.

RALPH STEADMAN

you can do except watch in wonder. The planing sometimes sets the fish free, even more than tail-walking and aerial somersaults. Selected examples:

May 7: Around 4:30, I hooked a shad that was on for three or four minutes before it shed the hook, jumping, and the dart flew back past my ear.

May 13: Four AWOLs—one near the boat after twelve minutes. No mistakes.

May 25: Spectacularly, a buck shad does three consecutive somersaults, high above the water, remaining on the line. Now comes somersault 4. He ejects the dart in midair. Draped over the tip of the jaw, the hook may have penetrated—as the hook often does—the thin soft tissue that the anatomist Willy Bemis calls "the membrane of the maxillary recess." After the hook has gradually widened the hole it makes in the membrane, the hook falls out.

June 10: She leaped, leaped again, tail-walked all over the river. The line was high and taut and the dart securely tied when, after five or ten minutes, she was gone. She expanded the penetration. She got herself away.

When a shad goes AWOL, you often cannot tell if it's your fault. You may have put on too much pressure. You may have used too little pressure. You don't know. All you know is that the line is slack, the fish gone. The hookup may have been so tenuous that it had no chance of lasting. You don't know. It may have been adequate but you tugged too hard, assuming an even firmer connection. Some shad are so securely hooked that there is almost no way to lose them. Most are hooked in such a way that the dart easily falls out when the line goes limp, whether the fish is in the water or in the net. You must assume that any fish is scarcely hooked. Shad fishing is a shrewd trade-off between handling and manhandling. Too much—she's gone. Too little—she's gone. That is one of the many reasons that you squirt adrenaline when they tail-walk or do somersault leaps. When they go AWOL, a choice is yours: to blame, or not to blame, yourself.

There is a good deal less latitude when the cause is impatience or bumbling—faults of the failed fisherman. Me, for example. Such as the time I jabbed that incoming shad in the head with the net, dislodged the dart, and the fish vanished. Among AWOLs of embarrassment, humiliation, and shame, the lowest form is the unravelled AWOL. The line unties itself at the hook. This is even worse than the horse AWOL—a fish lost to impatience by being yanked in too fast. Little buck shad invite the horse AWOL. They are male and they lack character, dimension, determination, and eggs. For ever and eternity they are second class. They are not roe shad. So you see them in the water flipping out on the end of your line, and your tolerance contracts. You yank them up hard and they fly away. You are a bad fisherman.

May 17: Two of my AWOLs were bucks that I lost beside the canoe because I muscled them too hard. I probably did that because I could see that they were bucks and was showing disdain for their sex and size. Little white males. I denigrated them because they weren't females with roe. They deservedly escaped. I should be fined for contempt of shad.

May 31: One of my AWOLs was a horsed buck. I was so irritated by him that I lost him—annoyed that he had the temerity to get on the line and flip and flap and wash and leap and execute complete somersaults while the females were patiently waiting their turn.

Twice in one week in my chocolate canoe I pulled a buck shad straight up out of the water, and then in midair it shed the hook, and then—free as a basketball—it dropped into the net in my hand. Those two fish deserved something better than a slam dunk.

May 12: Two AWOLs—one from another unravelled knot. I caught five or six fish on the dart and did not trouble to retie it; I got what I deserved.

May 13: Two got away at the net, including a big roe. The dart fell out of her mouth as I leaned toward her and forgetfully released tension. Lefty, you've done it again.

May 14: This would be humiliating if it weren't inconceivable. Four fish were lost after long battles because the knots came untied! Knots are not one of my failings, or used not to be. Five other fish simply got away. Three hours, nine AWOLs, one shad.

May 15: After thinking about my lost fish for twenty-four hours, I remembered that I was using old line. Dried line is difficult to knot snugly and may slip. I bought new line.

May 23: At the end of an hour and a half, the last of several fish simply leaves as the dart unties—a complete-fault AWOL. Careless. Inspect the darts, jackass. Retie the darts.

May 25: In the net, the fish had nothing in its mouth, *the dart was not tied to the line.* The dart was hanging in the mesh of the net. Evidently, the knot untied in the moment that I netted the fish.

Things have become so bad that I have been to see a fishing shrink. This was after a record loss of nine out of ten hooked shad. I had previously consulted my mentor, the fly-fishing writer Jim Merritt. Tall and very trim, he can shoot a fly line seventy feet with a motion so slow it looks lazy. But this was not his specialty and I wanted a second opinion. The doctor said that the slippage in old dry line was surely the problem. Yes, I told him, but most fish I lose, I lose in other ways. He said that I probably hold the rod high and straight up and keep the line taut like everybody else, right? Right. That's what they all do. Whenever you see a shad fisherman with a shad on the line, the rod is high and he is working in a plane straight in front of his nose. That's not the way to deal with a fish. The fish is always upright and knows where he is and what he's doing. You want to control, confuse, and direct the fish. Hold the rod horizontally off your left hip. Firmly, not too firmly, direct the fish that way. Make it move that way. After a time, swing the rod over until it projects horizontally to the right. Lead the fish that way. Now lead him the first way. Now the other way. He will become so confused he will turn on his side and take orders.

I also told the shrink I had particular trouble with freshly hooked fish that came near the canoe and were too active to control at close quarters. A just-hooked fish that gets close to the fisherman has "freedom" written on every scale.

Do you know how to make a fish turn over on its back? he asked.

Not without shooting it, I said.

He was holding a rod in his hand. You do this, he said. And he plunged the rod straight down. You plunge the rod into the river as if you were a matador killing a bull.

Returning to the river, I hooked into only eight shad, but I landed them all, and each time I held the rod on the horizontal. I drew them to the left, then drew them to the right, switching from the one side to the other every half minute or so, and more frequently as the fish came closer to the canoe. In the end, I was switching from left to right every five or ten seconds. The shad went schizophrenic. Even when they were fresh and only seconds on the line, they got so addled that they turned on their sides and frog-kicked. They were so cross-eyed they were not alarmed by the net. In close proximity to the canoe, one shad was a good deal more vigorous than the others had been. I plunged the rod tip straight down into the river. The shad turned belly up and backstroked into the net.

On a June morning, dawn to sunrise, Erwin Dietz, a retired mason from Queens, was catching shad as if he were eating potato chips. After I pulled anchor and got ready to depart, I paddled over to have a look at his equipment. He was using two lures: a dart, larger than a quarter ounce, and—three feet farther down the line—a flutter spoon. He said, "If you hit the daily double, it's a bitch."

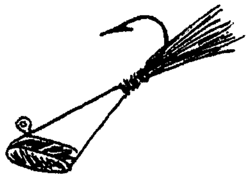
All that rigging depresses me. I refuse to fish that way. In the words of the master, Merritt: "Don't do it if you don't like it. You fish on your own terms." Merritt uses two flies sometimes: a dropper and—a couple of feet farther out—a point fly. In Erwin's rig, the dart is the dropper and the flutter spoon is analogous to the point fly. Shad fishermen call it the stretcher. Maybe, after all, I should try doubling up just once. I tie on two darts, a couple of feet apart. On the second cast, two shad strike simultaneously. In the comedy that follows, one goes AWOL. After catching another fish or two on the double rig, I revert to the single mode. As Shane said to Joey, "One gun is all you need, if you can use it."

Two weeks later, with a small dart doing nothing on my fly line, my resolve weakens again, and I tack on a flutter-spoon stretcher. Fish hits, nice weight, slowly comes toward the canoe. Fish digs in, becomes heavier and tougher, dives. Line goes out against the drag. Ten minutes. No progress. Twenty. Every time I move the fish, I lose the ground I have gained. Thirty minutes. Two fishermen on the New York bank have stopped to watch. I cannot bring the fish upriver. Thirty-three minutes. I am saying to myself, "This is not going to end well. Before long I am going to feel the weight go off the line." I can see a fish at the surface, evidently exhausted, but the pull is too hard to shorten line. Something is going to break. Therefore, I reach around with one hand and weigh the anchor enough to get it off the bottom, and step on the rope to keep the anchor from dropping. The canoe drifts downriver, while I reel toward the fish. There's a roe shad on the shad dart. I lift it into the canoe. The line to the flutter spoon is still taut. What to do? I pull it in by hand, and lift into the boat a second big roe shad. Two on one cast. Thirty-four minutes. It's a bitch when you hit the daily double.

In the near-darkness of an early morning, a towering mist was moving south across the surface of the water. Wading, I was spin-casting and catching fish. After a time, the dawning sun made shafts in the mist, gilding the line when it was in the air, and shining on the dart as it fell to the river. The dart was a three-sixteenths-ounce chartreuse with a dark-green head, and for some reason I didn't lose it. I lose at least a hundred darts a year to bottom snags; it's just routine. This dart had a charmed existence. In late afternoon, I anchored the canoe high in a New York eddy and resumed catching fish with the same chartreuse dart. From time to time, I ran my fingers over the monofilament and felt so much abrasion made by fish dragging the line over rocks that I snipped the dart away, removed the weakened line, and tied the dart back on. As dusk settled down, I became anxious to preserve and retire this amazing dart. I cast it gingerly into the middle of the channel, jigged it lightly along, retrieved it early, but kept on catching shad. For the day, six roes, eleven bucks, and three AWOLs—twenty shad on a single dart. I have it at home, mounted on a small cedar shake.

I made that dart with the lead wrapping from the neck of a bottle of wine—a messy, inadvisable process with highly impure metal, but I could not resist the idea. You heat up the lead in an electric pot and pour it into a mold in which you have first set a No. 2 O'Shaughnessy hook. A machinist in rural Pennsylvania fashioned the mold in his basement. It makes only one dart at a time, but perfectly—the head guillotined flat.

The painting takes me several weeks, because I've got other things to do, also because I want time to pass between coats—the white undercoat, the two color coats, and then a dip of the head in a differing color. In a fly-tying vise, you tie on the bucktail at the tip of the cone. You seal the tie with head cement.



YOLANDA WHITMAN

Essentially, all shad darts are homemade. If you don't make your own, you buy darts that someone else made at home. Scattered tackle shops make them on the premises. Behind the cash register, waiting for customers, the owner kills his day wrapping bucktail. Most tackle shops get their darts from nearby residents. The quality of shad darts is therefore as varied as the quality of organic fruit. Some darts that look beautiful lose their paint on the first rock they hit. Most look as if they were painted by someone watching television. Darts are sufficiently idiosyncratic to be traceable to the Zip Code where they were sold. A friend of mine likes to swim in the river with fins and face mask, picking up lost darts. He hooks them into his T-shirt until it weighs so much he almost drowns. He throws away the shirt and keeps the darts. On this planet, there may be fewer languages than varieties of shad dart.

I would be unforthcoming if I did not tell you that my darts are terrific-looking darts. Their colors are bright and sharply defined. If my darts were for sale, I'd be cleaned out. Their durability is as high as their gloss. Yet, for quality, consistency, appearance, and allure, it is an adventure in pretension even to allude to them on the way to a discussion of the shad darts of Armand Charest.

When he was a kid in Holyoke, Massachusetts, fishing off the Willimansett Bridge, shad darts were unknown to him. He used brass spoons, and spinner blades with beads. Hand over hand, he lifted the shad from the river and pulled them thrashing all the way up to the roadway, never mind that his line could have lifted a mako shark.

His forebears were French, Scottish, Micmac, and Malecite. His father was a loom fixer. Armand's grammar school was Precious Blood, his high school Holyoke Trade. He was trained as a linotype operator in an era when a linotype operator was soon to be as current as a tailor of chain mail. He became a wire-strander operator at a manufacturing plant in South Hadley, a job he held until an industrial accident led to his retirement at the age of thirty-five. He did not stop fishing.

He bought his first shad darts in a barbershop. He bought them also in Ma's Bait Shop. He couldn't find a good one anywhere. The paint was dull. The paint came off. The adhesion of the paint is fundamental: a shad dart relates to bedrock as a basketball relates to the floor. Charest therefore—in the middle nineteen-eighties—began to make his own darts. Selecting paints, he began with lacquers and was later drawn to "glo-in-the-dark" vinyls. That first year, he made four hundred darts and went shad fishing in the Connecticut River, leaving darts in a box on the bank behind him, with a sign: "3 for $1."

The following year, he made eleven hundred darts and sold them out of his tackle box in a single weekend. For the next season, he made three thousand darts. Selling them, he moved around—from the South Hadley Cove to the dam tailrace to the rapids above the Willimansett Bridge to the Chicopee boat launch to the bottom of Granby Road. He stopped at the waterwheels of Holyoke—the industrial-power-canal outlets that attract fish. He sold darts at Gas House, Valley Paper, Crocker A-B. Across the river, at the South Hadley boat launch, he parked his Toyota with the tailgate open and a card table beside it displaying his wares. Naturally, the scene attracted police. They told him he needed a Massachusetts hawker-and-peddler's license. He got one, but governments were not through with him. Enter the Internal Revenue Service. If you sell fishing lures, you must have a federal tax I.D. Did he have an I.D. number? No? Really? Had he been selling shad darts in the previous fiscal year? The year before that? For some time, he paid the I.R.S. twenty-five dollars a week.

Charest's darts, with their shifting levels and colors, are like the stratigraphic miniatures of Paul Klee. I would have thought it took him hours to make just one, but visiting his house in South Hadley a couple of years ago I learned that he could give a coat of paint to sixteen hundred darts in ninety minutes. He had added dimension to the term "cottage industry." We ranged from second floor to basement in a house that was essentially a workshop. Striper jigs were drying on the second floor among rods he was making and rods in for repair. The living-room couch was the workbench where he and his wife, Denise, would sit side by side in the evenings with racks of darts before them, tying their own blend of Flashabou and Polarflash in lieu of bucktail. In the basement, though, was the machine that had put this whole operation into a class by itself. Consisting of tricycle wheels, bicycle chains, hexagonal nuts, and threaded lengths of stiff wire, it would not have looked amiss beside an orrery. Functionally, it circulated in the way that an escalator does, with the difference that it not only revolved but also porpoised in and out of paint. Each wire was thirteen inches long and was threaded with enough hex nuts to make ten spaces where darts could hang wet and not fatally adhere to one another. The two ends of each wire intersected a bicycle chain, from which Charest had removed rivets so the wire would fit. When Charest turned the tricycle wheels, the whole rig moved. Rising, descending—into the paint or dripping above it—sixteen hundred darts were in simultaneous motion. At the time, his best-sellers were "hot pink and purple" and "hot pink with eyes." His personal favorite was "glo-yellow chartreuse and blaze." The red-and-white dart is still the classic of the craft—as enduring as the black hockey puck. Yellow-and-red is nearly as traditional. Charest makes darts in bewildering variegations of hue, saturation, and brilliance. ("It matters to the fisherman.")

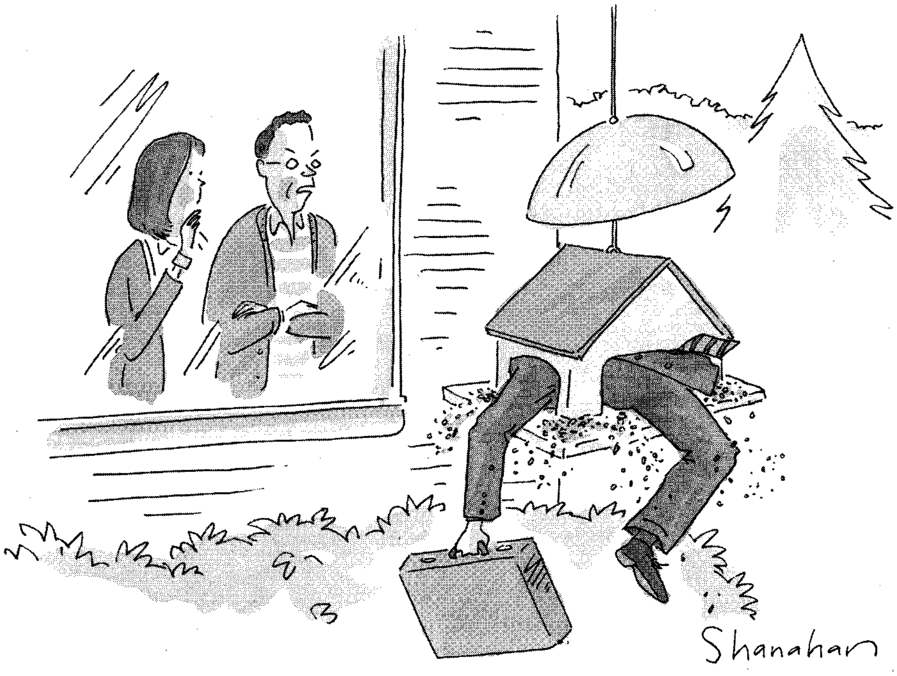
I learned from George Bernard, at the Shad Museum, in Connecticut, that William C. Miles, a Pennsylvania patent lawyer, poured metal into a turkey quill in the nineteen-thirties, making his patented Quilby Minnow, from which shad darts evolved.

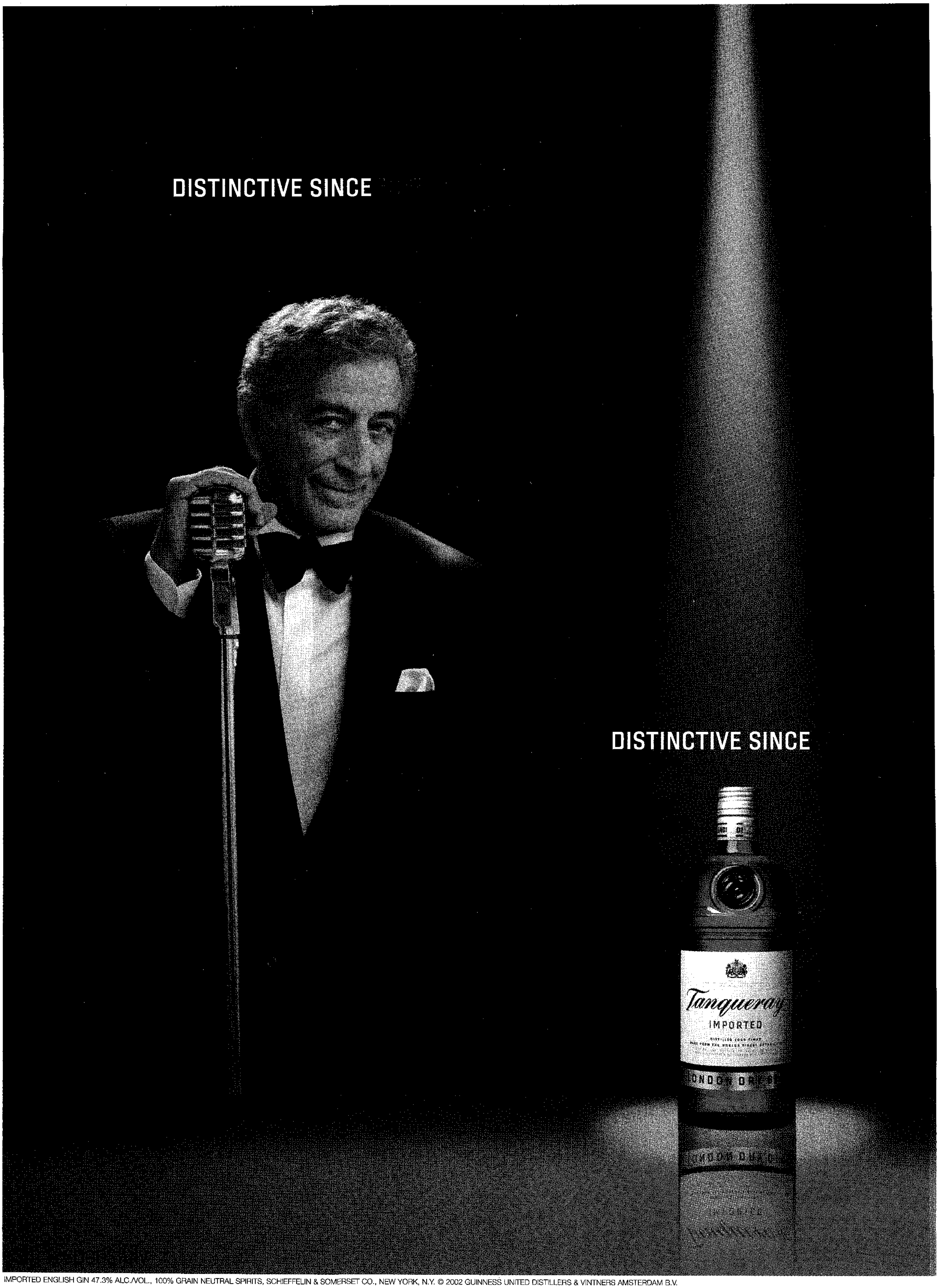
Charest makes them now in Inverness, Florida, in smaller volume and with simpler apparatus, delivering them to the post office. His retreat from the bank of the Connecticut River was less a matter of retirement than a matter of moral choice. He says he became more than disgusted by "the needless slaughter of the fish," and was made uncomfortable by the thought that he was contributing to the slaughter. "My presence there was more harm than good. If I wasn't there, maybe they wouldn't have did that." It gave him a sense of acute discomfort "to watch a person take what you made, catch a fish, and throw it in the bushes." He saw too many fishermen "from out of state" ignore the six-shad Massachusetts limit, fill up coolers, and go home to sell the fish. "Somebody's got to be a guardian," he once remarked to me. "People on the bank catch shad and kick them up into the trees. That's pathetic. It's not fair to the fish." One day, sitting in his van, he watched two guys in a boat catching shad. With a small baseball bat, they bashed the shad, and then returned them to the river. After a while, they came ashore to buy darts. Charest told them he had seen what they were doing. One of them shrugged, and said, "I've got to get them off my hook somehow." The guy was addressing the last person who was ever going to sell him another dart.

A dart that weighs a thirty-second of an ounce is so small that it can call to mind the dorsal hump of an ant. Thirty-second-ounce darts are in all respects like other darts, but Charest will tell you that some fishermen refer to them as "shad flies." The list would not include this fisherman. A shad fly is a furry, bead-eyed product, not a little drop of lead. Some fly fishermen—casting for shad—use tapered thirty-foot fly lines that are backed with monofilament. The thirty feet of fly line shoots through the rod guides and over the water like a javelin, with the monofilament hanging on behind. It is a way of crafting an extra-long cast—more, sometimes, than a hundred feet. When the fly descends toward the water, the line coming off the reel is the same kind of line that comes off a spinning reel. Shooting tapers, as they are called, come in a variety of sink rates, in order to give you an opportunity to buy three of them instead of one. A seven-weight sinking fly line is an alternative to the shooting taper. In the Delaware, you might want to switch to an eight- or nine-weight sinking line, especially in the higher water of early spring. When the river quiets down and warms up, you will want a floating line with a sinking tip, a so-called wet tip. This requires enough reels and spools to fill a closet. Nelson Bryant, writing his fishing column in the *Times*, once pointed out candidly that fly fishermen trying for shad "cannot cast as far or as often" as spin fishermen can, and in high water have more than a little difficulty keeping the fly deep, even with full sinking lines. He went on to say, "Blind casting with a fly rod for hours is also hard work, particularly if one is standing waist-deep in cold water." To anyone hardy enough to ignore these truths, he suggested using a weighted fly with a five-foot (or shorter) leader and a one-foot tippet of ten- or twelve-pound test. The largest American shad ever caught on a fly rod came out of the Feather River in Northern California, on a tippet of two-pound test—a seven-pound-four-ounce roe shad.

In *Fly Fishing Quarterly*, Robert Elman has written that shad will hit "sparsely tied yellow, white, or orange streamers," also White Millers, Royal Coachmen, Parmachene Belles, White Marabous, Dark Edsen Tigers, and Silver Yanks. The Delaware River guide Michael Padua has caught shad on a size-14 green-body caddis—a dry fly, always an uncanny achievement with a fish that has no interest in food. Padua says "you can catch shad on just about anything" from Twister-tail jigs to No. 2 and No. 3 spinners. Above Callicoon, he once saw two shad fishermen using No. 6 bare gold hooks.

Jim Merritt, who ties dry flies and can lay one on a floating leaf far across a current, will attach to his leader, without the least loss of self-esteem, an ordinary small shad dart—even a not-so-small shad dart weighing an eighth of an ounce. He nevertheless insists that he is


"Damn thing's supposed to be attorney-proof."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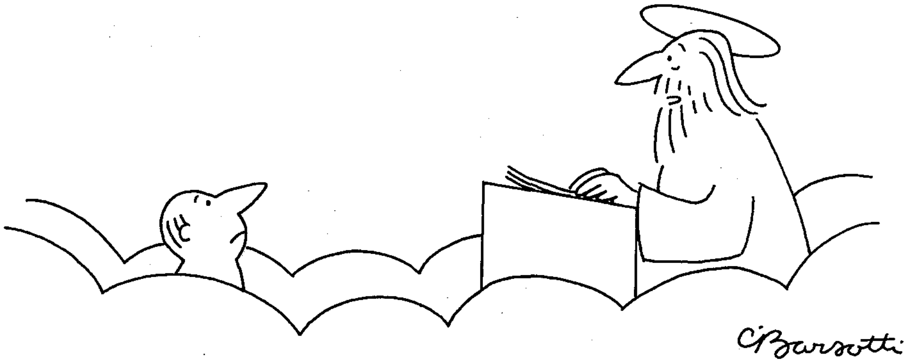


"Bad timing—he's in one of his Old Testament moods today."

• •

fly-fishing for shad. After all, he is surrounded by people with spinning rods, slinging, as the phrase goes, hardware. He may say that he is fly-fishing for shad, but I would say that he is shad fishing with a fly rod.

Now another June has arrived, and the river is low and therefore tight in the sense that fishermen on the two sides of the main current are not as far apart as they would be in times of high water. I am in my canoe, and across from me is the great Erwin Dietz, standing on a rock, catching nothing. This happens to him so infrequently that he shows bewilderment and annoyance. While his spinning gear sweeps the channel, I slip into the river a small yellow dart by Armand Charest. In my hand is a nine-foot fly rod that Merritt made for me with Winston blanks. It is strung with a six-weight sink-tip line, five feet of braided leader, four feet of lead-core leader, and a 3X tippet. In no time, the rod is an arc, and I am dealing with a roe shad. Soon, I am dealing with a second shad. A third shad. My routine is risible, but it works. I am not casting a green-body caddis. I am casting weight, and there is nothing feathery about the motion. I flick the dart behind me (there's plenty of room) and let the line load up on the water. I cast it forward a short way into the current, then backcast it farther into the eddy behind me, where it lands and reloads for the long shot across the river. The rig is so heavy that the water helps. With so much weight, you cannot conventionally forward cast and backcast, forward cast and backcast, making flattish loops in the air until you are ready to let the whole enterprise go. You'd be cracking a lead-tipped whip. Finally, I bring the rod forward and let it all fly. The dart goes out maybe sixty feet. It connects with another shad.

Erwin shouts above the sound of the river: "Was you here yesterday? Yesterday I had eleven. Today I can't catch nothing."

I am shad fishing with a fly rod, not because of some holy reverence for the fly rod but because sometimes in the milder currents it seems to work better than a spinning rod, somehow does a better job of finding the fish. Erwin shouts again: "I'm beating a dead horse."

Just for the sheer science of it, I first used a chartreuse dart with a green head, then a white-and-red dart, then yellow-and-red, then orange-and-black, then green-and-black, then gold with white bucktail, then pink-and-black, and now green-and-white with more sequins than Elvis Presley—a dart I made six years ago and have hitherto preferred not to use. All have provoked strikes.

"I can't pick my nose," Erwin shouts. He had his eleven yesterday, and will no doubt double that tomorrow. But this is today.

I have seen odder forms of fly-fishing. Once, in a single week in July, I connected with two smallmouth bass in the Delaware River and two king salmon in the Gulkana River, in Alaska, in water restricted to "fly-fishing only." On the Delaware, I was drifting, fly casting, and letting the canoe guide itself around rocks. The bass, which hit woolly buggers, came out from behind the rocks. Collectively, they weighed thirty ounces. The combined weight of the two salmon was around a hundred pounds, I imagine. I had walked several miles to the clear Gulkana, a tributary of the Copper River, which was opaque and swollen with glacial meltwater coming off the shoulders of stratovolcanoes twelve and sixteen thousand feet high. There were four of us, and we had come down from the University of Alaska, in Fairbanks. Frank Soos, a fiction-writing English professor, rigged up an authentic fly rod, but the rest of us conformed to the local interpretation of "fly-fishing only." We used surf-casting rods with large-diameter spinning reels. The current was so deep and heavy that a lot of weight was needed to take the fly down, and the regional idiosyncrasy in this respect was pencil-thick plumber's lead. You unrolled four, five, six inches of lead, cut it, and slipped one end into a tight-fitting sleeve of surgical tubing that was tied to the line. The fly was a pom-pomic wad of orange and black yarn around a hook that seemed large enough to hang beef. You heaved the rig a hundred yards. Or something near it. The long stick of lead bounced on the bottom. In seven hours, I had five or six hits and the two strikes. One salmon was on the line for about ten seconds, the other more briefly. The first, when I struck, came up, porpoised, and looked like a whale. I lifted the rod tip, and reeled in sinker and fly. The other salmon picked up the fly and immediately took off for the far side of the river. It felt like a dump truck. After it was gone, I retrieved the surgical tubing without the metal, the unravelled line without the fly. Hence there was some disgrace involved. Had those salmon stayed on the line and come to the riverbank, I would have smoked them, broiled them, and made gravlax. But they were not absent without leave. From time to time, all day, the running kings in the Gulkana broached and flashed their colors. Just the sight of them in their setting was catch enough.

In the Delaware one spring, I was fishing in waders in fast water when a big roe shad got on the line, and I walked her ashore, walked her out of the current into two inches of water, where she flipped, threw the dart, and went AWOL. Minutes later, I was out there casting again, and I felt something stop the dart, something that felt the way a large twig will feel if, in fast current, it intersects a dart. In shad fishing, from time to time, your dart hooks into a sort of inverse AWOL—a by-catch, a species other than *Alosa sapidissima*. After a time, I realized that what I thought was a small floating stick was actually something moving, slowly, lightly, in sinister undulation. Delicately, I reeled the thing in. When it was scarcely a rod's length away, it came up into view—a sea lamprey, with a shad dart in its mouth. I don't know if you have seen a lamprey's mouth—known to Willy Bemis as the oral hood—but it is probably the last thing in this life you would want to touch. Large, annular, cuplike, suctorial, it has several rings of conical teeth. On its tongue it has larger teeth. A lamprey's mouth would fit around your thumb. What to do? Three feet of cartilaginous snake body were moving sinuously behind the dart, and there was no way in this universe that I was going to put a hand on either the body or the dart. I walked the lamprey ashore—out of the river and up the bank and onto a big flat sunbaked boulder, where the dart fell out of the mouth. I went back to the river. The lamprey never moved. Under the sun, its skin darkened from greenish brown to carbon black.

When you look up from the river, you see bald eagles waiting to feed on dying shad. You do not see the timber rattlesnakes up the bank. One afternoon, when I had finished fishing in the canoe, I paddled toward shore and saw a fresh green willow branch blocking the small landing place I had left two hours before. A fat beaver, its back toward me, was feeding on the branch. Silently, over the flat water, the canoe approached it like an arrow. When the canoe was within inches, the beaver turned, tail-slapped the river, and submerged. I saw it stretched out in the shallow water to my left, like a long-haired fish. It poked its head up, saw me, slapped, dived, and shot away for the deep river. Soon it was up again, head out, swimming back and forth, back and forth, its eyes on me. I held up the willow branch for it to see, and flung the branch in its direction.

In addition to rainbows and smallmouths, I've caught dace on shad darts, and chubs. One time, my friend George Hackl, fishing in waders near two other shad fishermen and opposite me in my canoe, overheard this dialogue while my rod was bent and throbbing:

"That guy across the river is really catching 'em."

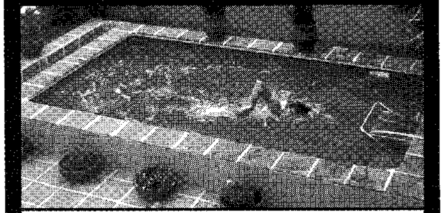
"What does he know that we don't know?"

This is what I knew that they did not know: the fish on my line was a sucker.

The strangest catch I have ever reeled in on a shad dart was a shad scale and a gypsy-moth caterpillar. For a couple of seconds, I felt a shad on the line in the middle of the river. Then the shad was gone. As the dart came in through the fast current, it felt odd—the smallest bit heavy. Up out of the water came the impaled shad scale, the caterpillar alive and clinging to it. The shad had been foul-hooked, nicked in the side. The hooked scale, coming toward me through the water, had been seized by the caterpillar, swimming in the river.

One morning around the end of May, I was fishing a bright-pink dart and quickly netted three roe shad. A fourth strike came, a succession of thumps on the line. It felt just like a shad, so I was really surprised when it came in close: a writhing American eel. American eels are not lampreys. Long, narrow fish with gills, fins, backbones, air sacs, and ribs, they are delicious. Nevertheless, they look like snakes and have razor teeth. The hook was in firm and I had no inclination to remove it. After hoisting the eel into the canoe, I picked up a pair of scissors and snipped the line.

Eels are everywhere in the river, in and around the big rocks. A drop of blood will convene them. That evening, cleaning shad, I was sitting on a flat rock surrounded by flowing, shallow water. I had dropped the giblets into the water. Now, with the shad on a filleting board, I slid a knife blade along the backbone, slicing off a fillet. I leaned over, reached into the river, and began to wash the fillet. Like a flash of lightning, an eel came up and grabbed it, tore it right out of my hands, and started off with it. I picked up the filleting board, leaped off the boulder, and smacked the eel. The eel gave back the fillet. ♦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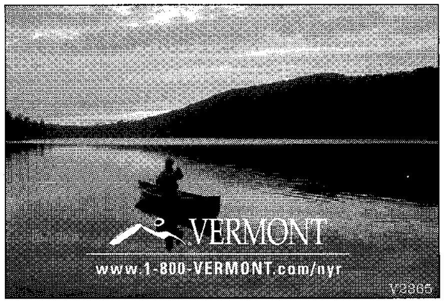
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ANNALS OF COMMUNICATIONS

THE HOWELL DOCTRINE

The Times' new top editor has big plans for the paper. Not everyone is ready to go along.

BY KEN AULETTA

A man who takes the subway wearing the white panama hat of a plantation owner is either blithely arrogant or irrepressibly self-confident, and in the nine months that Howell Raines has been the executive editor of the *Times* both qualities have been imputed to him. Raines is fifty-nine, and has worked for the *Times* for a quarter of a century; he has been praised and derided for the sometimes coruscating editorial page that he ran from January of 1993 until August, 2001. But until last year his acquaintance with the newsroom was only passing, and to most of his *Times* colleagues he was an alien—as the metropolitan editor, Jonathan Landman, characterized him, a "Martian."

Raines is built close to the ground (he is five feet eight), with short, stocky legs that churn rapidly—like those of "a Tasmanian devil," one female reporter says. He has a courtly manner and an engaging wit, and he is fond of quoting the former University of Alabama football coach Bear Bryant, or Yeats, or what he learned from his father, growing up in Birmingham, Alabama—sometimes all three, and sometimes trying the patience of his listeners.

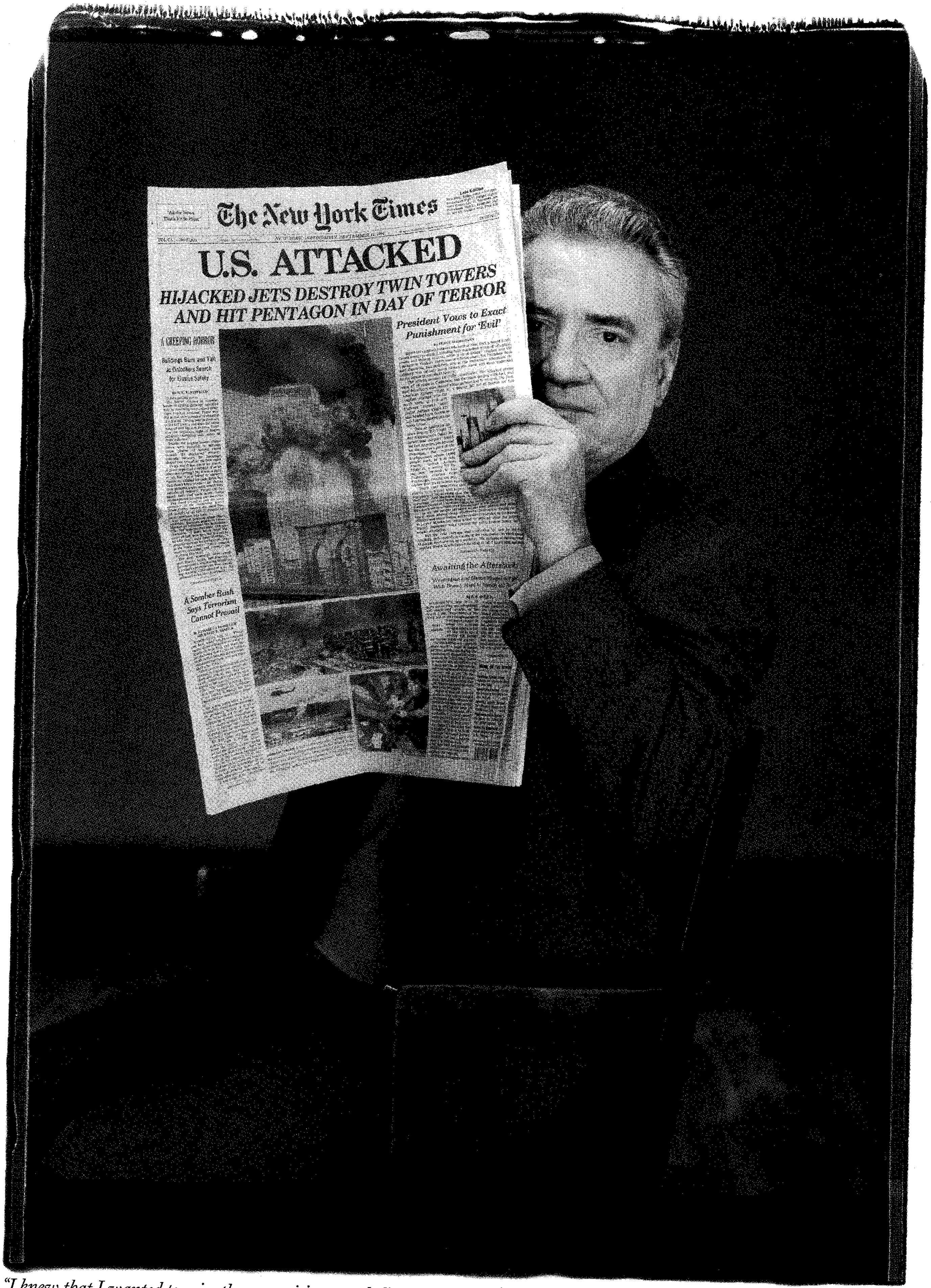
Raines's eyes are nearly black; in photographs, even when he's half smiling, they convey an unsmiling intensity. That intensity has excited and occasionally alarmed the inhabitants of the world's most powerful newsroom, who often ask if this son of hill-country Alabamans is comfortable leading a newspaper staffed by Ivy Leaguers. They see that he enjoys power and is unafraid to use it, but wonder why he is often hostile to others who hold it. What is clear, a little more than a year since it was announced that he would succeed Joseph Lelyveld in the top job, is that Howell Raines is quickening the pulse of the *Times.*

Raines has been waiting for this chance for years. His friend R.W. (Johnny) Apple, Jr., the paper's political sage, recalled a trip they took to South Africa in 1995, when Raines talked about one day becoming executive editor. " 'I'm not at all sure I'll get it. But I'll be ready if I get it. I'm going to prepare myself,' " Apple remembers Raines saying. In early 2001, Lelyveld told Arthur O. Sulzberger, Jr., the *Times'* chairman and publisher, that he planned to retire as executive editor; and when Sulzberger decided that his choice was between Raines and Bill Keller, the managing editor, Raines had indeed prepared. "I knew that I wanted to raise the competitive metabolism of the paper," Raines said to me during a series of interviews this winter and spring. When Sulzberger asked him what he might do as executive editor, he told the publisher that he "wanted to enliven the front page with more exclusive breaking news—original stories." He knew that, unlike almost every other newspaper in America, the *Times'* daily circulation was growing—by April of 2001 it had reached 1.15 million—but that this growth came from the national edition, introduced in 1980, which now accounted for nearly half of the paper's readers. To continue its expansion, Raines argued, the *Times* had to become "a must read" for new customers, and he described the paper in somewhat military terms: just as the "Powell doctrine," promulgated by General Colin Powell, declared that American troops should be sent into battle only if they had enough force to overpower the enemy, so Raines proposed covering big stories with the overwhelming force of the newspaper: some twelve hundred editorial employees, who work in newsrooms on the third and fourth floors of the Times Building, on West Forty-third Street, and in offices scattered throughout the building, as well as in twenty-eight foreign and ten domestic bureaus.

The newsroom was introduced to its editor-to-be on May 21, 2001. For Raines, the victory was total. He did not have to contend with his rival, Keller, because Keller was given a biweekly column, alternating Saturdays with Frank Rich, and became a senior writer for the *Times Magazine.* With Sulzberger's prior approval, Raines picked a somewhat reserved deputy managing editor, Gerald Boyd, to be his managing editor; they had worked together in the Washington bureau in the mid-eighties. A decade later, Boyd had been in the running for the managing editor's job, but was rejected by Lelyveld; Boyd, in turn, described Lelyveld and Keller as not "inclusive," a word with deep meaning for a fifty-one-year-old black man. Unlike Keller, Boyd was invited to join the regular Wednesday lunch that serves as the paper's steering committee, along with Sulzberger; Raines; Gail Collins, whom Raines had hired, and who succeeded him as the editorial-page editor; and the *Times'* president, Janet L. Robinson.

Raines spent the summer getting to know the newsroom. Earlier in his *Times* career, he had been based in Atlanta, Washington, and London; now he spent evenings visiting various desks, and took an assortment of editors to coffee, lunch, and dinner, all in preparation for taking over, after Labor Day. He met with the sports editor, Neil Amdur, and said that he wanted more college sports, particularly football and basketball. He met with Margaret O'Connor, the picture editor, and Mike Smith, her deputy, and heard that *Times* photographers felt like "second-class citizens" because they weren't sent out often enough on breaking stories; their best photographs were often unused. The photo department, Raines learned, had put these unused photographs up on a wall, under the words "The Ones That Got Away." Raines assured O'Connor and Smith that things would be different.

Raines said that he would manage the newsroom in the "collegial" way that he'd run the editorial board, which has four-


The New York Times
U.S. ATTACKED
HIJACKED JETS DESTROY TWIN TOWERS AND HIT PENTAGON IN DAY OF TERROR
President Vows to Exact Punishment for 'Evil'
A CREEPING HORROR
A Somber Bush Says Terrorism Cannot Prevail
Awaiting the Aftershocks

"I knew that I wanted to raise the competitive metabolism of the paper," Howell Raines said. Photograph by Mary Ellen Mark.

teen members. But he can also be autocratic—some say bullying. In a sharp and, to those inside the paper, controversial departure from the Lelyveld era, Raines said that he wanted what is known as "the masthead" to be more engaged in shaping stories and coördinating news coverage. (The masthead consists of the managing editor, his deputy, and the seven assistant managing editors whose names appear under the executive editor's on the *Times* editorial page. The department editors, whose names do not appear, actually run the various sections of the paper.) "Howell has thought about this job a long time, and he loves it," John Huey, the editorial director of Time, Inc., who worked with Raines on the Atlanta *Constitution* in the early seventies, said. "Some people who held that job wore it like a hair shirt." (Huey mentioned Lelyveld and his predecessor, Max Frankel.) "Howell Raines expected to have fun." His energy was obvious, and the newsroom was probably more excited than anxious in the months before he took over. There was little indication of just how fast Raines intended to move.

A WEEK IN SEPTEMBER

The Raines era began on September 5, 2001. When Raines arrived at his office, in the northeast corner of the newsroom, his favorite image was already on the wall behind his desk. Taken by a *Times* photographer, George Tames, it is a sequence containing seven black-and-white photographs of Senate Majority Leader Lyndon Baines Johnson cajoling Senator Theodore F. Green, of Rhode Island; in each succeeding frame, L.B.J. shrinks his colleague's space until Green is bent backward over his desk and L.B.J. is hovering just inches from his face. Implicitly, these photographs suggest how Raines intends to bend the *Times* to his will.

"I just like the tribal culture of a newsroom," Raines told me one day as we sat in a small room behind his office. "I'm—in some sense—home. The populist side of me is very much about my identification with the culture of a newsroom." He explained what he meant by citing Bear Bryant. "Coach Bryant had a lot of flaws—he was late to support integration," Raines said. "But he was a very influential figure for any student of leadership. . . . When Coach Bryant walked onto a football field, everybody in that stadium knew that football would be played here today."

September 5th, a Wednesday, was a relatively slow news day; the front page had stories about the New York mayoral primary, about Administration officials defending Bush's budget, about immigration policy. But the new editor's presence could be felt. The Washington bureau chief, Jill Abramson, remembers that Raines called her and said, "I want something with pop for the Sunday paper." To assure more "pop," he initiated, that first day, a 10:30 A.M. meeting of the masthead, to supplement a noon meeting, originated by Lelyveld, of the department and masthead editors and a 4:30 P.M. page-one meeting. The morning session, Raines said, was meant "as a teaching device for me" and as a way to "include the masthead" in shaping the paper.

"Very impressive. I'd like to find five thousand more like you."

On Monday, September 10th, Raines announced that Andrew Rosenthal, the foreign editor, was being promoted to assistant managing editor, and would serve as Gerald Boyd's principal news deputy, and that Roger Cohen, until recently the Berlin bureau chief, would become acting foreign editor. Raines also wanted the media reporter Alex Kuczynski to write the sort of pop-feature pieces that would appeal to the *Times'* national audience. "It was no accident that the first transfer I made when I got down here was to move Alex Kuczynski from media to style," Raines said. "I did that to set a standard."

On the morning of September 11th, Raines rose at around seven o'clock and prepared a pot of tea for Krystyna Stachowiak, thirty-eight, an attractive, self-possessed Polish-born public-relations executive who shares a Greenwich Village town house with him. Then he read the *Times* and sent e-mail. He wasn't yet dressed when he heard that a plane had crashed into the World Trade Center. Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., called immediately. Minutes later, Raines was on Seventh Avenue, gaping at the smoldering north tower, to his left, and, to his right, at the staff of St. Vincent's hospital, in their green scrubs, mobilized for victims that never came. Uptown, Gerald Boyd was in a barber's chair at 104th Street and Amsterdam Avenue when a passerby poked his head in the door with the news. "I leaped out of the chair," Boyd recalls, and he hurried to the subway, which had already suspended service, before hailing a gypsy cab and getting to the office at 9:10 A.M., about forty minutes before Raines arrived.

Roger Cohen had just dropped off his son at school in Park Slope when he heard an explosion and looked up and saw orange flames billowing from the Trade Center and the sky raining paper. He raced to catch the No. 2 train, which ran under the World Trade Center site.

"The subway must have been the last one to run," he said. Other members of the masthead never made it to the office that day. Andrew Rosenthal couldn't get across the Hudson from New Jersey; the ferry that Al Siegal, an assistant managing editor, was taking from Hoboken was turned back by the Coast Guard.

A few blocks from Boyd's barbershop, Jonathan Landman, the metropolitan editor, was at a gym on 106th Street, when he looked out the window and saw his wife running toward the building. She told him of the attacks. He hurried home and started calling some of his hundred-odd reporters, directing traffic to Ground Zero.

The police reporter Christopher John (C.J.) Chivers was already downtown. It was primary day in the city's mayoral election, and he had been assigned to the Board of Elections headquarters. He was wearing his best suit. When his beeper went off, he ran half a mile to Ground Zero, approaching Liberty Street just as the second plane hit the south tower. As desks and concrete and steel beams plunged to the street, he dived into the entrance of a liquor store near Trinity Church, and soon began interviewing people huddled nearby.

Chivers tried calling the metropolitan desk, but his cell phone didn't work. To escape falling debris, he moved under the Liberty Street Bridge to another building, stepping in dust "that was like fine powdered snow." He had reached a building that housed a day-care center, where children were fretting over the whereabouts of their parents, when he heard a "high-pitched, twisting, grinding, metallic screeching" that "sounded like an enormous train collision" and felt like an earthquake. The south tower had collapsed. He found a telephone and called Landman, who told him, "I don't really know what to tell you to do, but you have good judgment, so follow it." Chivers spent the next twenty-four hours at Ground Zero, feeding information to *Times* reporters in the newsroom.

Gerald Boyd was in the newsroom. "The dimensions kept growing," he recalled. "We heard Congress had closed and the airlines were shut down. We discussed what would happen if the New York *Times* were attacked. Could we put out a paper?" John Geddes, the deputy managing editor, who was at his desk when the first plane crashed into the Trade Center, said, "This was a story we had been training all our lives for."

Raines, who is unembarrassed by such comparisons, likened his role to that of Ulysses S. Grant: before attacking the biggest story of his career, he would concentrate his forces. All day, Raines and Boyd moved back and forth from their neighboring offices, sometimes ministering to distraught staff members. Sometimes they comforted themselves. They were not, of course, mere witnesses. Their families, their friends, their city were jeopardized. "The toughest thing for me was in a personal sense," Boyd said. "I had dropped my son at school and couldn't reach my wife and son until 5 P.M." Late in the afternoon, Krystyna Stachowiak left her midtown office, and made her way to the *Times*, where she greeted Raines with a hug.

For its September 12th edition, the *Times* deployed some three hundred reporters, thirty staff photographers, and two dozen freelance photographers. Eighty-two thousand five hundred words were devoted to the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon; there were seventy-four bylines accompanying sixty-seven stories, filling thirty-three pages of a ninety-six-page paper. Nearly 1.7 million copies were printed, almost half a million more than normal. At the top of the front page, which is now framed on Raines's wall, was a headline—"U.S. ATTACKED"—set in ninety-six-point type, a size used only twice before: to announce Neil Armstrong's walk on the moon, in 1969, and the resignation of President Nixon, in 1974. In the center of the page were four color photographs, showing the Twin Towers ablaze and the destruction at Ground Zero. Running down either side of page 1 were four stories, not the usual seven. In a September 12th e-mail to the newsroom, Raines wrote, "Thank you one and all for a magnificent effort in putting out, in the midst of a heartbreaking day, a paper of which we can be proud for years to come. . . . In a different context of violence, Yeats wrote that 'a terrible beauty is born.' "

Long before September 11th, Raines had given much thought to ways of conveying a sense of command. He says that he learned the importance of this from his father, who never finished high school but built a store-fixture business in Birmingham which eventually made him a millionaire. He often told colleagues the story of one summer after he graduated from Birmingham-Southern College and had gone to work for his father, who warned him that sooner or later an employee would challenge him, and told him that, when he did, "you've got to win that fight." Now, in September of 2001, Raines wanted to challenge his editors, to get into the fray before assignments were made.

Raines became what the assistant managing editor Michael Oreskes referred to as "the reader-in-chief," meeting constantly with the assistant managing editors. To better penetrate the Pentagon and the national-security agencies, he brought the defense-and-intelligence expert Michael Gordon back from London. He asked Patrick Tyler, a trusted friend, to return from Moscow, where he was bureau chief, to write "lead-alls"—stories meant to bring together the different strands of a news event, like the stories that Johnny Apple had written during the Gulf War. Each move caused hurt feelings and aroused some opposition. So, too, did Raines's insistence on working directly through the masthead editors rather than through the department editors, as Lelyveld had done. Raines wanted his assistant managing editors to demand more of the department heads. "How come something we discussed at the page-one meeting didn't get in the paper today?" he would ask, according to Soma Golden Behr, an assistant managing editor. He started asking for stories that offered "all known thought" on a subject—what was known about Osama bin Laden's finances, or about anthrax. "Hunt big game, not rabbits," he would say. He was impatient with complaint, and in truth there was little time for it.

One complaint he would not abide was that he didn't respect borders between departments—that he shouldn't parachute in his "star" writers to cover stories. Criticism that he favored stars had attached itself to Raines when he ran the Washington bureau, and it was a criticism, Sulzberger told those he confided in, that would have blocked Raines's promotion if Sulzberger was not convinced that he had changed. Raines, however, believes that an editor's first obligation is to the readers; he wanted to use distinctive writers, such as Rick Bragg, in Pakistan. Bragg, a roving national correspondent with a taste for elegiac, sometimes purple prose, had scant overseas experience and was, in the words of John Geddes, "not an easy writer to handle" but "one of our best tellers of stories." Raines asked Bragg to come off a tour for a new book, which had just appeared on the *Times* best-seller list; Raines says that Bragg, who is a friend, volunteered. Raines went to the foreign desk and told Roger Cohen to send Bragg overseas, which Cohen did reluctantly.

"He wanted to own all parts of this story," Abramson, the Washington bureau chief, said of Raines. He wanted the *Times* to be first. "Target selection is key," Raines said. "And then you have to concentrate your resources at the point of attack. Geddes has another term for my style, which is 'flood the zone.' I've been in journalistic contests where I was up against real formidable opposition"—with the Washington *Post*, when he worked in the Washington bureau. "If I'm in a gunfight, I don't want to die with any bullets in my pistol. I want to shoot every one."

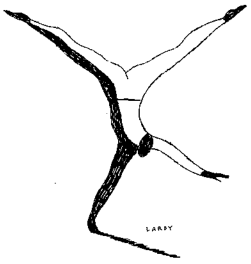
THE LONG MEADOW

Near the end of one of the old poems, the son of righteousness,
the source of virtue and civility,
on whose back the kingdom is carried
as on the back of the tortoise the earth is carried,
passes into the next world.
The wood is dark. The wood is dark,
and on the other side of the wood the sea is shallow, warm, endless.
In and around it, there is no threat of life—
so little is the atmosphere charged with possibility that
he might as well be wading through a flooded basement.
He wades for what seems like forever,
and never stops to rest in the shade of the metal rain trees
springing out of the water at fixed intervals.
Time, though endless, is also short,
so he wades on, until he walks out of the sea and into the mountains,
where he burns on the windward slopes and freezes in the valleys.
After unendurable struggles,
he finally arrives at the celestial realm.
The god waits there for him. The god invites him to enter.
But, looking through the glowing portal,
he sees on that happy plain not those he thinks wait eagerly for him—
his beloved, his brothers, his companions in war and exile,
all long since dead and gone—
but, sitting pretty and enjoying the gorgeous sunset,
his cousin and bitter enemy, the cause of that war, that exile,
whose arrogance and vicious indolence

He also wanted the *Times* to be accessible, but there was too much information about the September 11th attacks, in too many different sections, interrupted by too many ads; and there were too many stories containing unrelated but vital news. At one masthead meeting, Raines turned to Al Siegal, a production expert, and asked, "Can we make a section?" Siegal said they could, and Sulzberger quickly agreed to spend the extra money. A Nation Challenged appeared on September 18th, giving the story its own section.

The ten-thirty masthead meeting became the executive editor's management tool. "We were inventing not just procedures but a philosophy of how to put out this newspaper," said Siegal, whose responsibilities include drawing up the front page. Raines, he went on, wanted to give masthead editors and himself a new kind of role. "We were essentially elbowing our way into the process." It was not unusual, certainly, for an editor to take command, as A. M. (Abe) Rosenthal did with the Pentagon Papers, or as Lelyveld did during President Clinton's impeachment. (Michael Oreskes, who was Washington bureau chief under Lelyveld, says that he heard from Lelyveld "four times a day.") But, if Lelyveld tended to take over the editing of individual stories, Raines was relying on his masthead to manage—some said micro-manage—the entire paper.

One of the talents to emerge from the coverage of September 11th was C. J. Chivers. Reared in Binghamton, New York, Chivers enrolled in an R.O.T.C. program at nearby Cornell. After graduating, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marines; he stayed in nearly seven years, served in the Gulf War, and left as a captain. "I wanted to be a writer, but I had no money," he said. "Journalism was the only writing job with a union card." Chivers is a wiry man with broad shoulders, black hair only slightly longer than a Marine brush cut, a cleft chin, and beguiling modesty. "Praise is kryptonite," he said, attempting to steer me to interview another reporter. After the Marines, he enrolled at the Columbia School of Journalism; later he got a job with the Providence *Journal*, where he wrote a nine-thousand-word series on the imperilled fishing industries of Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, for which he won the 1996 Livingston Award for international reporting, given to journalists under the age of thirty-five. (Raines and I are two of eight national Livingston judges.) Raines, an avid fisherman, was particularly enthusiastic about Chivers's entry, and in 1999 he helped to engineer his hiring by the *Times*. "I had in mind that if I ever came down here he'd be a great guy to cover a war," Raines recalled.



Chivers, who is thirty-seven, had been assigned to the so-called "police

plunged the world into grief.
The god informs him that, yes, those he loved have been carried down
the river of fire. Their thirst for justice
offended the cosmic powers, who are jealous of justice.
In their place in the celestial realm, called Alaukika in the ancient texts,
the breaker of faith is now glorified.
He, at least, acted in keeping with his nature.
Who has not felt a little of the despair the son of righteousness now feels,
staring wildly around him?
The god watches, not without compassion and a certain wonder.
This is the final illusion,
the one to which all the others lead.
He has to pierce through it himself, without divine assistance.
He will take a long time about it,
with only his dog to keep him company,
the mongrel dog, celebrated down the millennia,
who has waded with him,
shivered and burned with him,
and never abandoned him to his loneliness.
That dog bears a slight resemblance to my dog,
a skinny, restless, needy, overprotective mutt,
who was rescued from a crack house by Suzanne.
On weekends, and when I can shake free during the week,
I take her to the Long Meadow, in Prospect Park, where dogs
are allowed off the leash in the early morning.
She's gray-muzzled and old now, but you can't tell that by the way she runs.

—*Vijay Seshadri*

shack," at Police Headquarters, downtown; his breakout assignment was as a Ground Zero correspondent, where his Marine background proved invaluable. When he came uptown twenty-four hours after the towers collapsed, his feet were bleeding. He went to the office to brief his editors, then to his apartment, on the Upper West Side, where he threw out his suit and shoes, showered, and slept. That night, he went back downtown, wearing work boots, jeans, and a Marine T-shirt. He stationed himself next to a Verizon truck just outside the security zone; he bought several cups of coffee, and, looking like a Marine volunteer, got past security and through to Ground Zero. Once there, he lay down beside sleeping police officers and firefighters, "so when I woke up I was one of them." He became what he calls "the garbage man" at the site, setting up and emptying trash receptacles. "No one asked if I was a reporter," he said. "I took discreet notes on scraps of paper." After several days, the metro editor, Landman, called him and asked if he wanted to come out. No, he said; security had tightened and he'd never get back in. When the National Guard started checking I.D.s, a sergeant who, like Chivers, had attended ranger school helped sneak him past security.

Chivers stayed at Ground Zero for twelve days, writing a page-one diary of this emerging "village":

> The inhabitants of ground zero ate together in abandoned restaurants and beside piles of putrid garbage, they fell asleep together wherever they could, they sobbed and prayed together, and, as they became familiar with Lower Manhattan's emerging new landscape, they shared directions to working phones and bathrooms that were not splattered with vomit. . . . Now and then a body, or some part of a body, would emerge, and the firefighters would bag it and begin the long march to the morgue tent.

In October, Chivers was assigned to cover the war, first from Uzbekistan, before slipping into Afghanistan in November. Although he had never been a war correspondent, he did not feel at any disadvantage. "It's just journalism," he said. "You go around asking people what happened. . . . It's no different over there than here. Same stuff. Slightly worse living conditions. And lighter editing."

The *Times,* to be sure, was not alone in its brilliant 9/11 coverage. The Washington *Post* won a Pulitzer Prize for national reporting. The *Wall Street Journal,* whose headquarters were wrecked by the collapse of the Twin Towers and whose managing editor, Paul E. Steiger, was briefly missing, published a newspaper the next day; it won a Pulitzer for breaking-news reporting. The *News,* a Pulitzer finalist, produced vivid accounts from Ground Zero, and the Los Angeles *Times* excelled in war coverage. But, among America's newspapers, none matched the reach of the *Times.*

Reporters like Chivers, Barry Bearak, Dexter Filkins, John F. Burns, David Rohde, and Amy Waldman, from the war region; Judith Miller, William J. Broad, and Stephen Engelberg, on bioterrorism; and Landman and some of his reporters—including Jim Dwyer and the metro columnist Clyde Haberman, who wrote an elegant daily summary of the news, from Ground Zero to Kabul—are just a few of the reasons that the *Times* was celebrated for its coverage of September 11th and afterward.

Perhaps the most talked-about stories were the short, unsigned biographies of the dead that appeared each day under the rubric "Portraits of Grief." The idea had originated in part with the metro reporter Janny Scott, who was frustrated with an assignment to write about victims when no one would concede that there were any. Scott, who is forty-six, has a rare talent for making other people want to confide in her. She kept expecting to receive a list of victims, but it never came. Her September 13th story, co-written with Jane Gross, was about the flyers being handed out on street corners with pictures of the missing. The next morning, Scott headed to the metro section, where she spoke briefly with Landman and two of his deputies, Christine Kay and Susan Edgerley. Scott thought that the families she had interviewed would love to talk about their missing relatives as if they were alive, and she wanted to tell the stories in the voice of the person who told them; Kay suggested that each story focus on a single anecdote.

"Among the Missing" first appeared

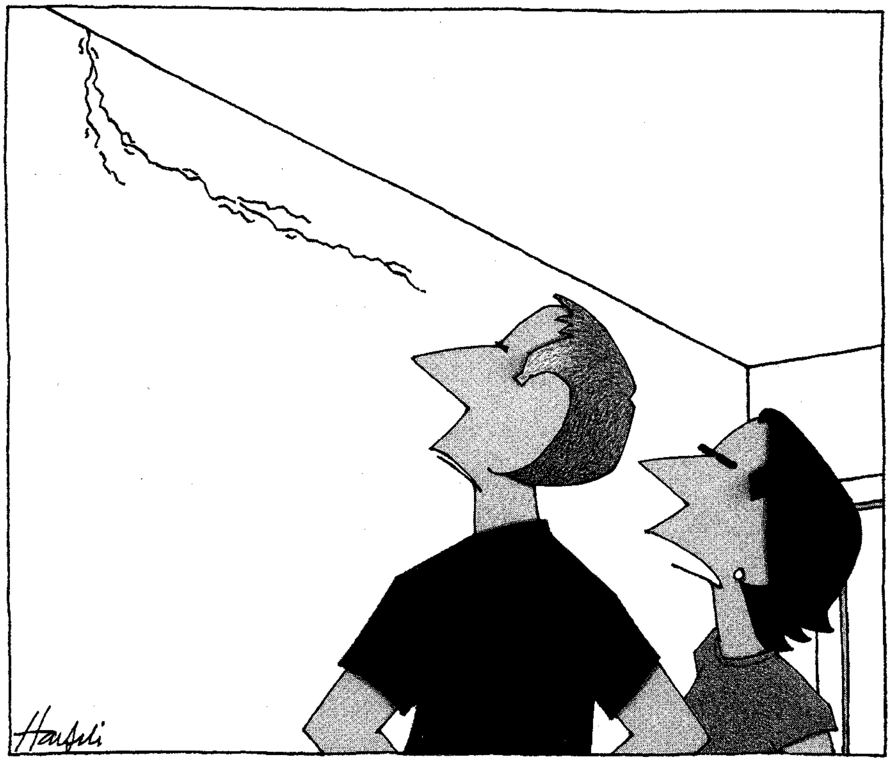
on September 15th—the next day, the title was changed to "Portraits of Grief"—and eventually a hundred and ten reporters contributed to twenty-one hundred profiles. "People pull me aside now on the street," Scott said, and tell her how "it really helped them and made them understand things they didn't understand before, made them experience this and recover from it almost, or begin to recover from it, in a way."

THE AGENDA

The imperatives of September 11th slowed Raines's agenda but also speeded some changes. Among early casualties were some of his predecessor's appointees. Although Lelyveld had known for months that he was a lame-duck editor, he still had a newspaper to run. Raines worried that Lelyveld had saddled him with people whom he might not have chosen, such as Nicholas Kristof, the associate managing editor responsible for the Sunday newspaper. Raines admired Kristof's work as an overseas correspondent (he and his wife, Sheryl WuDunn, shared a Pulitzer Prize in 1990 for their coverage of China) and his profiles of Bush during the 2000 Presidential campaign. But Raines and Kristof didn't see things the same way. Matters came to a head at a late October page-one meeting over a story from Pakistan about a deformed woman whom worshippers treated as if she possessed healing powers. Kristof was dubious; he said the piece, by Rick Bragg, was gripping, but he thought that it lacked significance, and he pushed another story for the front page.

"Are you telling me it's too good a story?" Raines asked, his eyes menacing Kristof. "What's wrong with putting on page 1 a story everyone will talk about?"

The Bragg story ran on the front page that Sunday. A few weeks later, with a nudge from Raines, the publisher gave Kristof a one-year assignment as a twice-weekly international columnist. (In an e-mail, Kristof declined to comment on "internal exchanges.") Raines also reversed Lelyveld's appointment, last summer, of the Los Angeles bureau chief, Todd Purdum, to replace, in due course, Adam Clymer as chief Washington correspondent. Purdum had been one of the newspaper's White House correspondents during the Clinton Administration, but Raines thought that he lacked the foreign-policy and national-security experience required for the new job. He made Purdum the State Department correspondent.



"Can't we just get some load-bearing wallpaper?"

Raines pressed Glenn Kramon, the business editor, to cut down on "soft features" and get more news on the front of the business section. Kramon had been business editor since 1997, and had some sixty reporters at his disposal, the second-largest pool of reporters, after metro. At meetings, Kramon recalled, Raines would badger him to move more quickly, not to wait until they nailed down every last detail of a story, a delay that could give competitors a chance to beat the *Times*. "It's like taking your best shot after the buzzer," Raines said. He was at first so exasperated by Kramon that he thought of replacing him. "He pushed us hard," Kramon said. Raines wanted more news not just from Wall Street but from Hollywood, the fashion world, and the media.

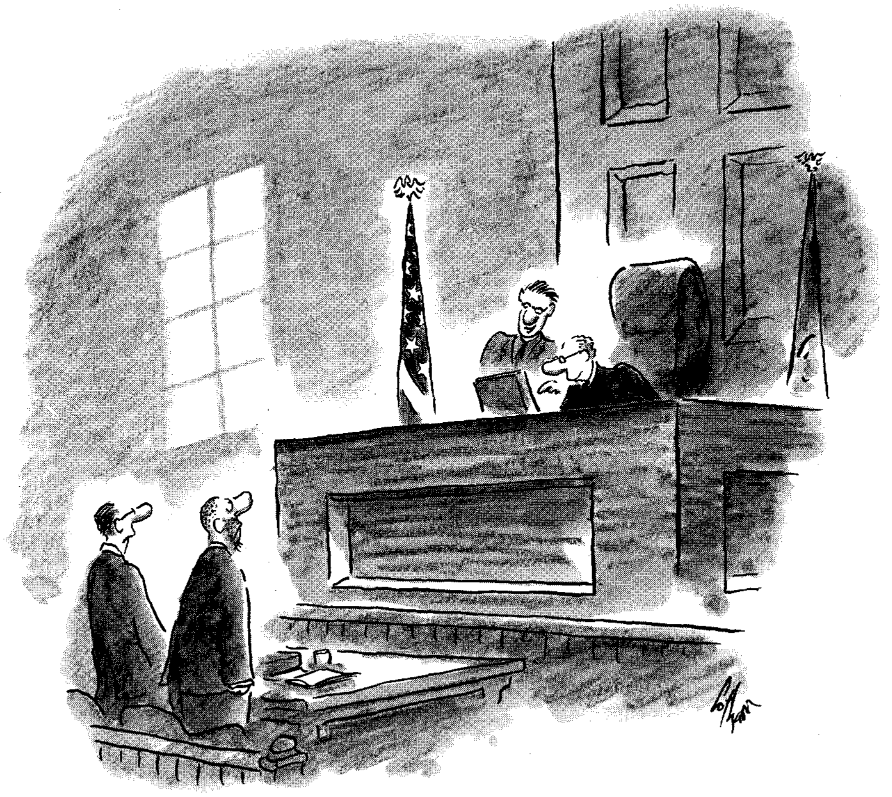
Sometimes Raines imposed his own views on a story. In December, when Gerald Levin announced that he would step down as C.E.O. of AOL Time Warner and that his protégé, Richard Parsons, would replace him, editors were puzzled by the meaning of the move. Suddenly, from one end of the long conference table, Raines asked, "It's obvious, isn't it?"

The others weren't so sure that it was.

"The old company won," Raines said. "That's the story!" The former political reporter, who is proud of being able to anticipate stories, was convinced that Levin and the Time Warner side of the company had won a battle with the AOL side. This editor-driven account appeared the next day, and it upset several business reporters, who thought the analysis was simplistic—and wrong. Perhaps emboldened by the nearly flawless news decisions that he had made since September 11th, Raines could now halt a conversation by exclaiming, "Isn't this what's really going on?" One senior editor worried that Raines was too opinionated—not in an ideological sense but in a narrow, perhaps cynical view of those in power—and that this certitude was going unchallenged.

The ten-thirty masthead meeting became a source of newsroom unhappiness. Soon after the editors walked down what one reporter called "the DMZ staircase" (it separates most of the third-floor newsroom from the area where many of the masthead editors have offices and where the foreign- and national-desk staffs sit in rows), orders would be issued. Katy Roberts, the national editor, recalls getting instructions from Boyd or Rosenthal: " 'O.K., these are the five stories we want to get done.' " She was not happy with this system, which the newsroom characterized as "top-down management." Roberts said, "Joe Lelyveld always used to say that the best ideas come from reporters. I grew up with that at the paper. . . . And I always believed that was true." She had once worked for Raines on the Op-Ed page, and they were friendly. But now she complained loudly, sometimes tearfully, about having to undo assignments she had already made.

These complaints did not deter Raines, who knew that laments about intrusive editors were nothing new. In a 1971 memoir, "My Life and the *Times*," the former executive editor Turner Catledge describes one of his innovations, the daily four-thirty meeting, which many editors opposed: "I think some of the editors felt that these daily meetings were a threat to their long-standing autonomy (I certainly regarded them as such)."



"O.K., you've just sentenced him to twenty-five years to life—now push 'send.'"

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In October, 2001, the New York *Observer* reported "tensions" between the masthead and the Washington bureau—another seasonal phenomenon at the *Times*. (Tension between Washington and New York was at the center of Gay Talese's 1969 portrait of the *Times*, "The Kingdom and the Power.") In this latest round, Jill Abramson was initially anxious because Michael Gordon and Patrick Tyler were brought in by Raines to enhance her bureau, and because the masthead now included three former Washington bureau chiefs—Raines, Craig R. Whitney, and Oreskes—and a former deputy, Rosenthal. It was well known that Tyler had been a fishing buddy of Raines's going back to the seventies, when they worked together at the St. Petersburg *Times*, and that Raines had hired him away from the Washington *Post*, in 1990; and many suspected that Raines wanted to install him as bureau chief. Raines says that his hope was to persuade Abramson eventually "to move to New York as part of the masthead or as a department head." But Abramson had become bureau chief only the previous January, and her son was still in high school. Abramson is a friend of the columnist Maureen Dowd, who is as close to Raines as any reporter on the paper is; a portrait that Raines once drew of Monica Lewinsky is on her office wall. Dowd laced into Raines for demeaning Abramson.

Raines went out of his way to praise Abramson, and to say that he saw her in a larger role at the paper, and she and Dowd were somewhat mollified. "She's very good at something Howell loves—she is tough," the editorial-page writer Steven Weisman, a Raines friend who has an office in the Washington bureau, said of Abramson. "Hemingway is one of Howell's favorite writers," Weisman went on. "There are Hemingway people and there are Fitzgerald people. Howell is a Hemingway person." So, in this view, is Abramson.

Raines believed that, with Johnny Apple, who is sixty-seven, about to become an associate editor, the paper needed other authoritative voices in Washington; he was sure that Patrick Tyler, at fifty, was his man. Tyler had headed bureaus in Cairo, for the Washington *Post*, and in Moscow and Beijing, for the *Times;* covered the Pentagon and national security and defense for the *Post;* spent a year and a half as a visiting fellow at Stanford; written two books; and briefly hosted a show about Congress for PBS. Other people had serious doubts. "Tyler is an extremely talented guy," someone who has worked closely with him says. "He has a motor and you can hear it purr. He's got raw energy. But is he wise enough?" *Times* reporters pointed out that Tyler had little experience covering the White House, or campaigns, or much politics at all, and whispered that their editor was guilty of cronyism.

In the end, Abramson accepted Tyler's move to Washington, but she did complain that Raines would bypass her and call Tyler about a lead-all. Her greatest frustration came when she and her editors were on the speakerphone to New York, outlining stories they were planning. "It was humiliating," someone who watched this unfold said. "It wasn't 'Jill, what do you have in the Washington report?' It was 'Jill, this is what we think should be in the Washington report.' " Abramson did not dispute the substance of most of the ideas from

New York editors; her quarrel was with the "dictatorial style." A Washington friend of Raines's said, "Howell and his people are making the mistake everyone makes. They have this new toy and they are arrogant." The Washington bureau started referring to the masthead as the Taliban, and to Raines as Mullah Omar.

In mid-October, Gerald Boyd flew to Washington for what was to be a relaxed brown-bag lunch in the bureau's conference room. Boyd is a formal man, and an imposing figure, balding, and built like a linebacker. He is meticulously organized. He chews gum, but so slowly that his mustache hardly moves. "The most important thing I do is serve as an adviser to Howell," Boyd said in describing his job. "And by adviser I mean someone who tells him the bad and the good news." That day, Boyd said, his mission was to be a "trouble-shooter," to "reassure them how valuable they were."

The lunch was a debacle. The staff wanted to know why the best stories were assigned to reporters whom Raines had worked closely with when he ran the bureau, like Tyler. They felt insulted, particularly when Boyd said that the New York editors weren't playing favorites; they were picking the best people. Or when he said that they wanted more Johnny Apple analysis stories, because "no one does it better than Johnny." Eyes darted to Adam Clymer, then sixty-four, who was sitting directly across from Boyd. Although Clymer had the title Washington correspondent, he had not been given a major assignment since September 11th. In trying to describe the ten-thirty masthead meeting, Boyd kept saying, according to several participants, "We decide."

Boyd was shaken. "The issue of the heavy-handedness was a lot more personal than I certainly realized," he told me. "I didn't defuse it. I probably added to it, which wasn't good." After lunch, Abramson and Boyd walked across the street and sat on a park bench facing the White House. She told Boyd that she felt "disrespected" and said that if there wasn't a change she would quit. Perhaps it was her invocation of "disrespect" that broke the ice, for the conversation soon became human, that of a black man and a woman connecting on the common ground of what condescension feels like. "That was an important lesson for us," Boyd said. "It was a stylistic issue of how we were operating."

The next day, Raines apologized, told Abramson that she was "a star," and promised to abandon their speakerphone dictates. "I learned several things in that," Raines told me. "I was genuinely taken aback to learn that she was uncomfortable in those speakerphone meetings." And he was reminded that the message he intended to send was not always the message received. The next time they were on the speakerphone, Abramson said she wanted to speak first. The first time the masthead interrupted, she declared, "I'm not finished." When she did finish, Raines and the masthead broke into applause.

By the end of 2001, relations between Washington and New York had become less strained. But Raines remained what Soma Golden Behr admiringly calls "a guy in a hurry. I see a pretty determined guy who sees he has a limited lifetime at the top of this paper. He's not wasting a minute." To other *Times* employees, Behr's "guy in a hurry" was someone who had become a little too eager to show who was in charge.

THE ALABAMAN

Howell Raines's ancestors were farmers who owned neither plantations nor slaves. Many joined the Union Army, and called themselves Lincoln Republicans. They became Roosevelt Democrats during the New Deal. "Herbert Hoover had brought the hillbillies hunger and a firm economic policy," Raines wrote in his book "Fly Fishing Through the Midlife Crisis," in 1993. "Franklin D. Roosevelt had brought electric lights and the best crappie fishing in the world."

"That outsider mentality influenced me," Raines told me. His father, W. S. (Wattie) Raines, dropped out of school when he was fourteen and went to work in a horse-collar factory, and later as a cabinetmaker for the A. & P. Wattie Raines was a handsome man with a storyteller's gift. He met Bertha Walker at church when they were teen-agers. Her father was a farmer, a postmaster, and a justice of the peace, and after high school she attended a state teachers' college, and taught first grade for a year. They were married in 1929, when they were twenty-two. "She was a country girl who had a sense of style," Raines said. In 1931, their first child, Mary Jo, was born, and two years later their first son, Jerry. The family moved to Birmingham, where, in 1937, Wattie Raines and two of his brothers opened a lumber-and-woodworking business, Raines Brothers.

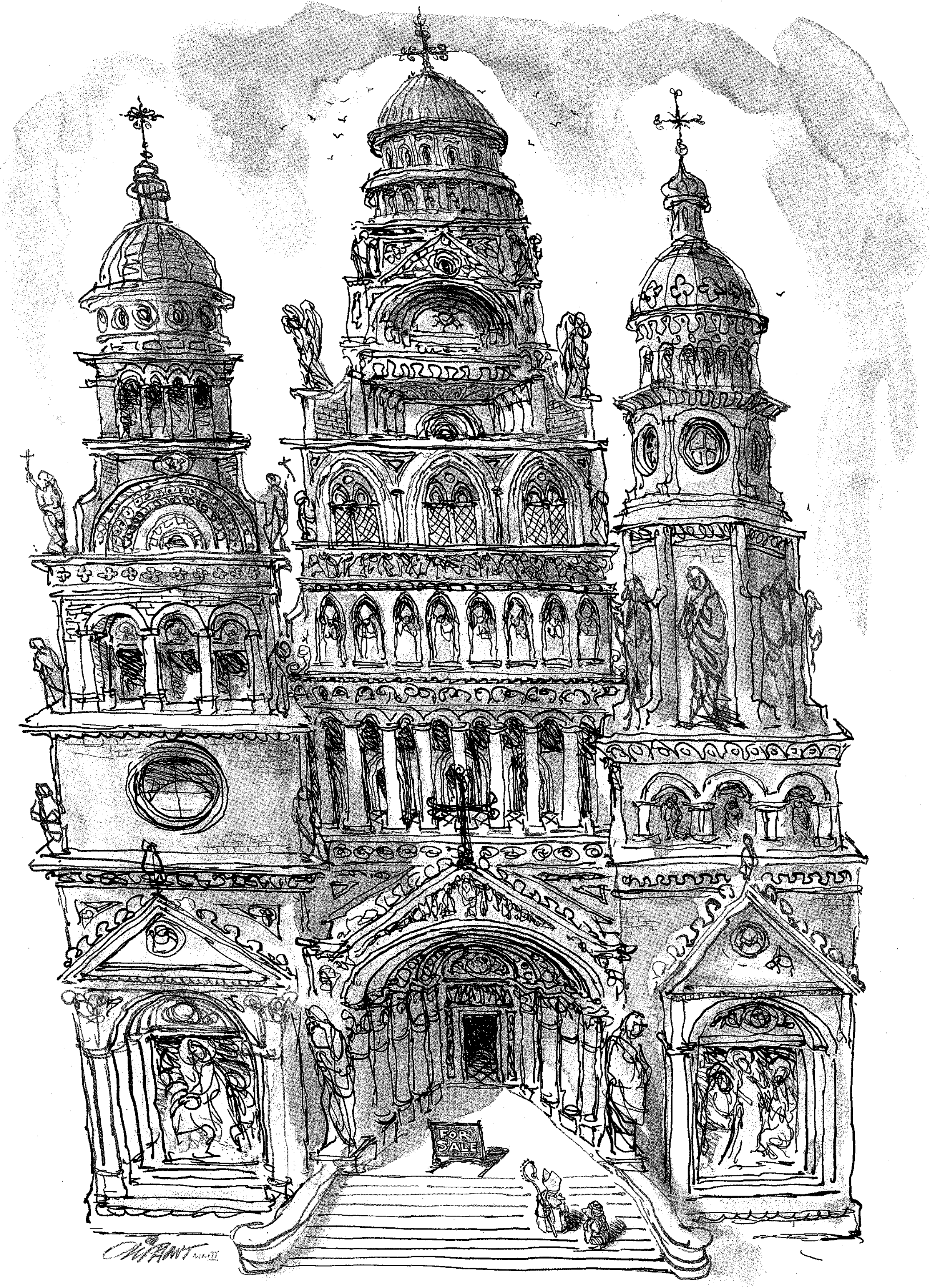
By the time Howell was born, in 1943, the store-fixture business was thriving. The family did not live on the side of town with the mansions and country clubs; his father built a three-bedroom bungalow on a fifty-foot lot not far from the steel mills. Eventually, they had a nanny, a Cadillac, and cottages on the Gulf in Panama City, Florida, an area that Raines would later popularize as "the Redneck Riviera." Raines had what he calls a "sunny" childhood. He was a good student and a skilled baseball player; he was popular, and was elected vice-president of his senior class. He often went fishing with his father.

He read Hemingway and Steinbeck; because of his mother, he said, his mind first opened to the possibility of being a writer. His father taught him to sympathize with the underdog and to compete hard. He also grew up with a disdain for sloth; his father would sneer, "That man is so lazy it would not be worth the lead it would take to kill him."

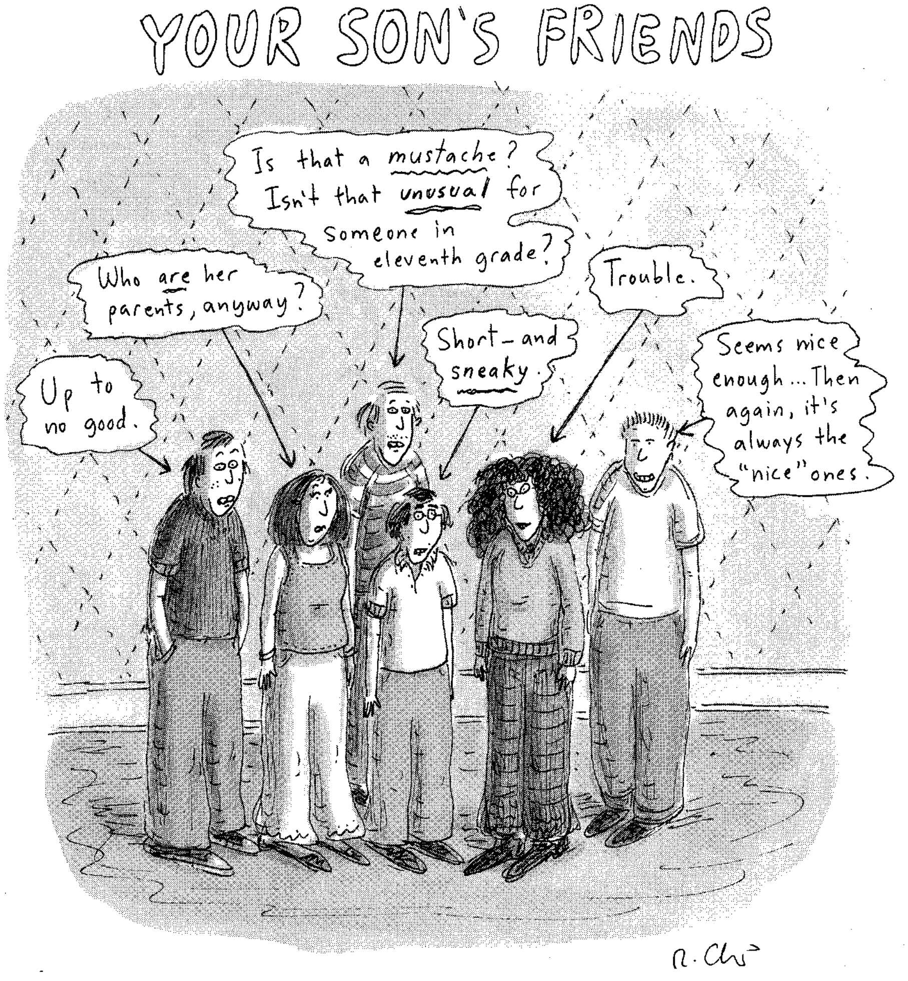
Grady Hutchinson, who went to work for the Raines household when she was sixteen and Howell was seven, had a big influence on young Howell. His mother was out during much of the day, his father working, and his teen-age siblings at school or with friends, and Grady became a surrogate parent. Howell had curly hair, which he hated, so Grady would heat a straightening comb on the stove and pull it through his hair. He was insecure about his appearance and his height, and she would tell him how good he looked. He wrote stories, and she was full of praise for these efforts. She read him Hemingway's "The Old Man and the Sea."

Most of all, Grady Hutchinson opened Raines's eyes to race. He was about nine, he wrote in "Grady's Gift," a 1991 article for the *Times Magazine*, when she began to speak to him "of a hidden world about which no one has ever told me, a world as dangerous and foreign, to a white child in a segregated

SKETCHBOOK BY PAT OLIPHANT



"What can I say? We have some settlements to deal with."


YOUR SON'S FRIENDS
Is that a mustache? Isn't that unusual for someone in eleventh grade?
Who are her parents, anyway?
Trouble.
Short—and sneaky.
Up to no good.
Seems nice enough... Then again, it's always the "nice" ones.

• •

society, as Africa itself." In the magazine piece, which won a Pulitzer Prize, Raines wrote that Grady "taught me the most valuable lesson a writer can learn, which is to try to see—honestly and down to its very center—the world in which we live." He came to see that his home town, Birmingham, where four young black girls had been killed in a 1963 church bombing, was the true evil heart of segregation. Birmingham was where Raines became imbued with what he called "the choking shame" of racism. To this day, racism remains a simple evil to Raines. (In early May, the *Times* sent Rick Bragg to cover the trial of Bobby Frank Cherry, an ex-Klansman accused of the church bombing; later, Raines himself went. "To paraphrase Faulkner's Dilsey, I saw the first and I wanted to see the last," Raines wrote in an e-mail a few days before Cherry was convicted. "This is a story that I've been living with since my senior year in college and reporting about since 1974." When Bragg had to leave the courtroom, Raines took notes.)

Grady moved up north in 1957, when Howell was fourteen. More than three decades later, in 1994, she returned to Fairfield, just outside Birmingham, to the house her mother had owned. She is sixty-eight, and keeps in touch with Raines by phone and sometimes sees him; she thinks of him "as more like a brother." She told me that when she informed him that she was moving back, "He had my whole house done over—the roof, the kitchen—the whole house. He paid for all of it. . . . He's the best thing that ever happened to me."

Raines graduated from high school in January of 1961 and enrolled at Birmingham-Southern College, just a few blocks from his home. "It was a great stroke of luck for me," he said. "I was able to be a small fish in a small pond, which is what I needed at that time. It had a great English department, and that's where I met Richebourg McWilliams, the most important influence on my life as a writer." It was also the height of the civil-rights movement—the time of the Birmingham police chief Bull Connor—but only two of the college's thousand students, Raines recalls, were "brave enough" to demonstrate. (Raines was not one of them.) A mixture of shame and a belief that he was witnessing a momentous event sparked his interest in journalism.

After graduating, in 1964, he planned to attend Florida State's Tallahassee campus, where a graduate teaching assistantship awaited. "My plan was to teach English and write novels," he said, yet he knew that if he pursued a doctorate he would get stuck on a campus. At about that time, a friend told him that the Birmingham *Post-Herald*, the smaller of the two dailies in the city, was hiring reporters. Raines landed a job there, and in November he got his first byline when he volunteered to write a feature story on an Alabama football game. He spent half the game standing behind Bear Bryant, which for him was "like watching John Wayne." In January of 1965, Raines was assigned to cover first the county school board, then Governor George Wallace's visits to Birmingham. Watching Wallace, he says, prompted in him a rage at lying—he "warped an entire society with what he knew as lies."

Later that year, a local TV station, WBRC, offered Raines a job—with a salary increase, from a hundred to a hundred and twenty-five dollars a week—and he accepted. For almost two years, he covered and wrote stories to be read by TV anchors, and wrote documentaries, including one on child abuse. He had joined the National Guard in 1965, when the Vietnam War was starting to escalate, to avoid being drafted. He was ordered to active duty for six months in 1967, a tour that ended his television career.

Then he enrolled in a master's program in English at the University of Alabama. He ran out of money but stayed in school and took a job at the Tuscaloosa *News*, covering city hall. He started work on the same day, in January, 1968, as a layout artist named Susan Woodley. She was two and a half years younger, and also from Alabama; she had been reared in Tuscaloosa and had just graduated from Randolph-Macon

Woman's College, in Lynchburg, Virginia. At first, she found him odd. What man brought fresh gardenias to the office and placed them on his desk? What Southern gentleman asked a woman to come to his apartment on a first date? "He had been trying to get me to go out with him," she recalled. "He wanted me to come to his house and watch 'Laugh-In.' I was offended and wouldn't go out with him."

In the spring of 1968, Robert Kennedy was scheduled to speak at the University of Alabama. Raines had something that Susan Woodley wanted: a press pass to the speech. They went on their first date with what newspaper reports say were ten thousand other Alabamans, most of them white, and after that they were inseparable. Raines believed that Kennedy could unseat President Johnson, end the war in Vietnam (which he says he found "misguided from the start"), and fight hard for equal rights. He said he was "a big believer in the possibility of rapid social change." Susan Woodley was struck, she recalled, "with Raines's self-confidence," with "how he didn't have a chip on his shoulder." They were married at her family's home in March of 1969.

They moved to a carriage house on twenty acres in Birmingham; every morning at five o'clock, Raines would go to the screened porch to work on a novel, tentatively titled "The Death of Bluenose Trogdon." "He had a lot of drive," Susan Raines told me. In the photographs that she took of Raines on their porch or with his fishing gear, one immediately notices his dark, brooding eyes. He had reason to brood: money was short, particularly when their son Ben was on the way. (He was born in 1970; a second son, Jeff, was born in 1972.) To earn more money, Raines left the newspaper to join the family store-fixture business as a plant foreman.

In late 1970, Raines returned to newspapers, as a reporter on the Birmingham *News*. He stayed just nine months, and then found a job with the Atlanta *Constitution*, whose former editor, Ralph McGill, had dared to denounce segregation; on weekends, he tried to work on the novel. Another young reporter, John Huey, who joined the Atlanta paper in 1974, remembers that Raines stood out. "He was the one management would talk to if they had a problem with the worker bees," Huey said. "And he was a very eloquent writer. He wrote about popular culture in an eloquent way. He always had an air that he had been around—and he hadn't." Raines became the paper's political editor in 1974. Later that year, he was given an advance by Putnam to write an oral history of the civil-rights movement. He quit the paper to devote himself to the history and to his novel.

The novel was "turned down by virtually every major house in New York," Raines said. He kept writing and rewriting it. His retirement from journalism was short-lived, and in 1976 he was recruited by another Southern newspaper legend, Eugene Patterson, to become the political editor of the St. Petersburg *Times*, where he began his friendship with Patrick Tyler. Raines was determined, however, to be an important novelist, and when, in 1976, Viking bought the novel, for six thousand dollars, he was ecstatic. "We had dreams of living in Europe, and he'd be writing novels and I'd be taking photographs," Susan Raines said.

Both books got good reviews when they were published, in 1977. Of "My Soul Is Rested," the oral history, Anthony Lewis wrote, in the *Times Book Review*, "No book for a long time has left me so moved or so happy." If this book captured Raines's hopeful, idealistic side, the novel captured his darker side. "Whiskey Man," as the novel was retitled, is a bleak story about an idealistic young man, Brant Laster, who returns from college to his beloved father and a tiny hill town that he invests with bright hopes and gauzy memories, only to encounter the Snopes-like prejudice of hypocritical preachers and spineless politicians. Its citizens, including his father, live a life of "doubleness," their faces masked by "eyes as flat and unfathomable as poker chips." Late in the novel, Raines's narrator says:

> Then I was back in the car and the car was rolling for home again, down past the church looming skull-like in the darkness, past the graveyard where Bluenose lay in the absolute silence and darkness and time-without-end of that pine box, the smell of the whiskey poured on it already smothered and absorbed by the compact earth.

After a brief moment of savoring his fine reviews and selling paperback rights to both books, Raines faced reality. It had taken years to finish and publish "Whiskey Man"; no one would advance him the kind of money he wanted for a second novel, and he had a family to support. "Doors always seemed to open for Howell in journalism and not in the literary world," Susan Raines said. He continued

"Feel free to hydrate during my presentation."

his work at the St. Petersburg *Times*.

His writing attracted the notice of editors in New York, among them Bill Kovach and Dave Jones, of the *Times*. In 1978, Raines and his wife came to the city and stayed at the Algonquin Hotel. He interviewed with editors at *Time* and at the *Times*. He was at "a fork in the road," feeling a need to choose between rolling the dice on a second novel and entering "the big leagues" of journalism.

Abe Rosenthal, the executive editor of the *Times*, remembers reading Raines's books before his interview and doing "something I rarely did, which is say, 'I want this guy on the paper.' Even before he was interviewed. The books were clear and strong, and what interested me was the catholicity of the books. This guy had more than one story."

CHOOSING JOURNALISM

Raines was hired by the *Times* as a national correspondent, based in Atlanta, and in 1979 was made bureau chief there. During the 1980 Presidential campaign, he was drafted by Bill Kovach, the new Washington bureau chief, to cover Reagan, and soon afterward Kovach offered him the White House beat, which he shared with Steven Weisman. Susan Raines, who had become a successful freelance photographer, was not happy to leave Atlanta, but the *Times*, and Howell, came first. Susan counts thirteen moves over the first eleven years of their marriage.

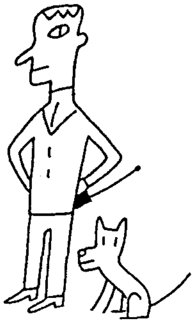
By 1983, Raines was weary of covering the White House—like many before him in that job, he felt like a stenographer. He was promoted to national political correspondent, to the great displeasure of the Walter Mondale campaign, which complained that he dwelled on campaign gaffes; after Reagan's reëlection, Raines became Kovach's deputy. He prided himself on forcing the Washington reporters to "start thinking of their stories earlier in the day" and to have their thoughts clear by 4 P.M., Gerald Boyd recalled. "His approach to management was meticulous," Kovach said. "He was meticulous in explaining what needed to be done." It was in this period that Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., became more aware of Raines. Sulzberger had admired Raines's stories, but remembers hearing that he was a "harsh" manager.

Meanwhile, Abe Rosenthal was about to turn sixty-five, the mandatory retirement age for masthead editors at the *Times*. Kovach, a beloved editor, had hoped one day to succeed him, but he was thought, even by his friends, to be too rigid—he didn't want to work overseas, and he found it hard to be diplomatic with those he held in low regard. After Frankel became the *Times*' editor, in the fall of 1986, Kovach left the paper to become the editor of the Atlanta *Journal-Constitution*.

When Frankel visited Washington, Raines asked about being appointed bureau chief. He did so with apprehension, because, of all the editors he had known at the *Times*, Frankel—who, like Rosenthal, had a sweep of experience at the paper—was the *only* one who made him feel insecure. Raines recalled, "He explained to me patiently and kindly that he was not making me Washington editor, because I didn't have foreign experience and was not as deeply experienced in economic issues as I was in national political issues." Frankel offered Raines a choice of three jobs: Paris bureau chief, London bureau chief, or national editor—all plums, but not what Raines wanted. He thought about going to Atlanta with Kovach, and that night he talked about his options with Johnny Apple.

Apple, who had been London bureau chief for ten years, recalled telling Raines that from London he could "write about anything," and could move around Europe. There was another, social advantage: the Sulzberger family passed through London regularly; Raines would get to know everyone who mattered to his career. "He's a man of intense, if not always acknowledged, ambition," Apple said of Raines.

Raines told Frankel that he would accept the London job. Yet he was not happy; he had given up fiction, although he continued to imagine a literary career for himself, and, at the same time, he fretted that his journalistic career had been sidetracked. He was forty-three. He needed to learn a new skill—foreign correspondence. Susan Raines had been working in a gallery in Washington and was thriving, and now she imagined having to become a London hostess. She was miserable; the marriage was fragile. Raines describes his mood at the time as one of "generalized restlessness . . . a general sense of life passing and one not having great joy." In many ways, his work in London reflected his ennui.



Senior people at the paper say they cannot remember a single memorable story that Raines did from overseas. Joe Lelyveld, who was then the foreign editor, told friends, "I did *not* lean on him. He was a little bruised." However, Raines had not given up hope of one day moving up the masthead. He had spent time with the Sulzbergers on their visits, and Philip Taubman, who had worked alongside Raines in Washington and had become Moscow bureau chief, kept in touch. Over a long lunch in London, where Taubman was on vacation, they discussed their careers. "We sort of agreed at that lunch that we'd try and work together if it worked out that we became editors," Taubman recalled. "He was very confident in declaring, 'I'm going to be an editor here and I want to find like-minded colleagues.'"

Perhaps Raines knew by then that Frankel's choice to run the Washington bureau, Craig Whitney, assisted by deputies Judith Miller and Johnny Apple, was not working out. After Raines had been in London less than two years, Frankel asked if he would like to trade jobs with Whitney. In July of 1988, the Raineses returned to Washington, where the bureau welcomed him. The marriage, however, did not survive. In "Fly Fishing Through the Midlife Crisis," Raines wrote of reaching a time of "a largely unspoken sense of finality and divergence." He added, "The winding down of any long marriage is a complicated story and a sad one, too, if the marriage has been a very good one for a very long time." Susan eventually remarried, and today is friendly with her former husband; he called her just before

"I, too, longed to find a cause greater than myself—fortunately, I never did."

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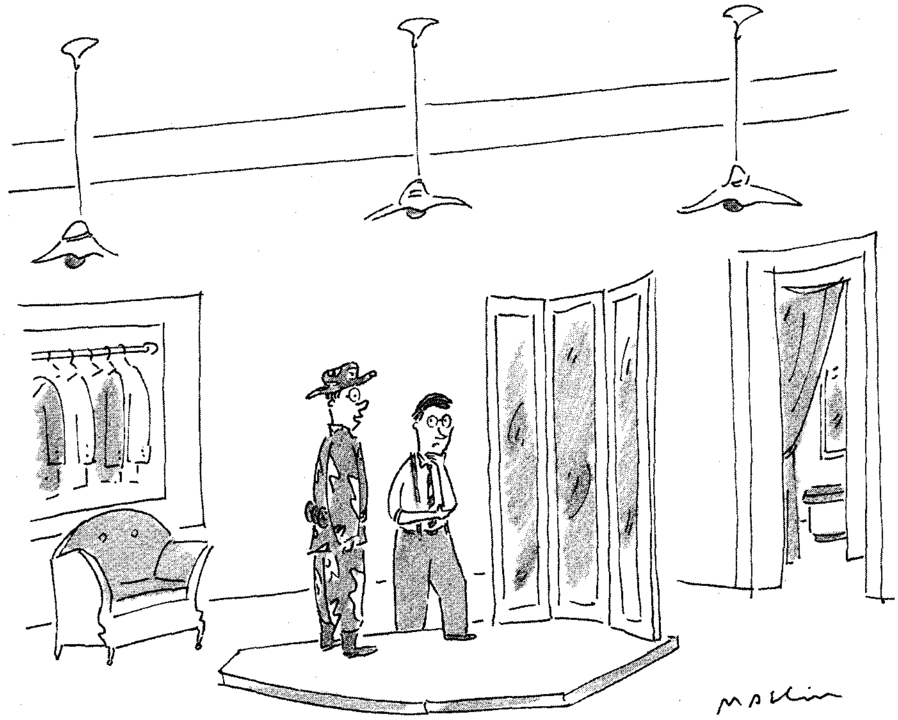
his appointment as executive editor was announced, she told me, and said that he "could never have done it without me." (The Raines children are married; Ben is a reporter at the Mobile *Register*, in Alabama, and Jeff plays guitar and composes for the funk band Galactic.)

Raines pushed the staff in Washington. "Howell came in and energized a lot of the reporters who needed it," the columnist William Safire, who is an avuncular presence in the bureau, recalled. But there were complaints. Taubman, who became Raines's deputy in Washington and is now the deputy editor of the editorial page, recalls that Raines "had a management style that was very hard-driving." One embarrassing story, often told, is that Raines once asked a news clerk to take his plants outside so they could get "natural rainwater." It was, Raines says today, "a mistake in judgment that I never repeated."

The biggest complaint was that he had a coterie of pals, and saved the best assignments for them. They would congregate in a part of the newsroom that became known as Happy Valley, and others felt ostracized. At one staff lunch, Raines spoke of his A team and his B team, one participant recalled. "Some of the real talents in the bureau were not realized, because they were not encouraged," he said. "I'm all for putting the best people on stories." It was only after Raines left that people like Michael Wines and David Johnston, whom Raines had pigeonholed as members of the B team, began to stand out. At the same time, Raines succeeded in ways that others hadn't; during his four years as bureau chief, there was less second-guessing from New York, and a universal sense that the *Times* was more than holding its own against the Washington *Post*.

By 1992, Raines was ready to move on. Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., had recently been named publisher, succeeding his father, and that spring Raines told him that the Op-Ed page needed a liberal columnist in Washington, to counterbalance Safire. "Arthur Jr. found Raines beguiling," Susan E. Tifft and Alex S. Jones recounted in "The Trust," their authoritative 1999 history of the *Times* dynasty. Raines was "a kindred spirit: a contrarian whose values had taken shape during the sixties, who viewed the world as a moral battleground." Sulzberger wanted the editorial page to speak with his voice—a more pointed, less old-fashioned voice—and,



"I'm also going to need something slightly less formal, for after the incursion."

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when Raines suggested the column, Sulzberger made a counterproposal: become editorial-page editor, succeeding Jack Rosenthal. "It was a leap," Sulzberger said. "But I knew we needed passion."

Raines did not jump. "I had never thought about that," he told Sulzberger.

"Why don't you think about it?" the publisher replied.

When they talked later that summer, Raines was surprised that the publisher didn't ask about his views on the issues of the day. Sulzberger felt no need to. He knew that Raines, like him, took liberal positions on affirmative action, capital punishment, abortion rights, health insurance, welfare, the environment, and the role of an activist government. Sulzberger said that he saw the editorial-page editor and the executive editor as partners in the *Times'* future. They would have lunch every Wednesday; they would discuss business as well as editorial policy. Although Raines knew that he would become what he calls "a staff officer," commanding not an army of correspondents but a platoon of fourteen editorial writers and thirty staffers, he also knew what awaited him if he said no. "The next hierarchical move for me would have been to be an assistant managing editor," he said, a position that would have diminished his chance of ever becoming executive editor or managing editor when Max Frankel retired. "I felt that he wouldn't offer me that kind of job unless he saw me as a potential executive editor," Raines said. He knew that Frankel, too, had been editorial-page editor before moving to the top newsroom job.

Raines would not take over until January of 1993, but, as he thought about filling the new post, he grandiosely chose a President as his model: Harry Truman. "I was probably more influenced by Harry Truman than by anyone else," Raines told me. "Truman wanted to find a one-armed economist so he wouldn't say, 'On the one hand, on the other hand.' " Nor did Raines believe in using precious space to outline opposing views. "My view was, let's use our space to make our arguments," he said.

Raines's politics were formed, as Tifft and Jones suggest, by the sixties, and also by his upbringing. He was proud of his own populism; in "Fly Fishing," he wrote bitterly about "reporting on President Reagan's success in making life harder for citizens who were not born rich, white and healthy"—as if Raines himself had not been born in all three categories. Over the next eight and a half years, he used the editorial page to rail against favorite targets: what he saw as a corruption of politics by money; the despoiling of the environment by oil and gas interests; the poor treatment of the less fortunate by H.M.O.s and insurance companies; the excesses of corporate America. Raines was certainly not anti-business—he grew up in a businessman's family and works for a company whose profits are essential to the well-being of its employees. But he was quick to attack what he saw as predatory practices or, in the case of Microsoft, monopolistic practices—all very much in the liberal tradition. He could also be provocative, as when, in a signed piece, he scolded the filmmaker Oliver Stone for inventing history and, in "JFK," for making a hero out of the New Orleans district attorney Jim Garrison, who had accused the C.I.A. of complicity in the Kennedy assassination. What was startling was that the *Times'* editorial-page editor went on to suggest another, "more likely" conspiracy theory: that the Mafia, not the C.I.A., may have been behind the murder.

In the past, the *Times* editorial page had been criticized for being too predictable, too fastidious. Raines's critics now found it becoming too shrill, particularly in its portrayal of the Clinton Administration, which Raines saw as ethically lax and politically corrupt, an enormous disappointment of early hopes. One member of the editorial board says that Raines showed more "rage" toward Clinton's obfuscations and outright lies than he did "toward genocide." Officials in the Clinton White House were furious; they thought that Raines was jealous or resentful of fellow-Southerners who succeeded as Clinton had. Raines said, "It was always surprising to me the degree to which the Clinton people saw things in personal terms"—an odd observation, since Raines had changed the tone at the *Times* but still expected the editorial page to be treated as if it maintained a detached voice.

If there is a common theme in Raines's commentaries—and his politics—it is a detestation of hypocrisy and lying, even in matters of lesser moment, such as a 1998 commentary, signed by

Raines, in which he attacked the Boston *Globe* columnist Mike Barnicle for plagiarism, and then the *Globe* (which is owned by the *Times*) for not firing Barnicle at once. The commentary Raines is proudest of was an unsigned piece in 1995 on former Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and his book "In Retrospect," in which he confessed to maintaining silence about his deep misgivings while sending Americans to die in the Vietnam War. Raines wrote:

> His regret cannot be huge enough to balance the books for our dead soldiers. The ghosts of those unlived lives circle close around Mr. McNamara. Surely he must in every quiet and prosperous moment hear the ceaseless whispers of those poor boys in the infantry, dying in the tall grass, platoon by platoon, for no purpose. What he took from them cannot be repaid by prime-time apology and stale tears, three decades late.

Steven Weisman said that Raines "loved making a statement and standing up for the dead, for the people he grew up with. It was a great reflection of who he is. When you strip away all the layers of civility and graciousness, you get to his unforgiving soul, particularly about race and class."

On the tenth floor of the Times Building, where the editorial offices circle a quiet library, Raines nurtured a happy family. During his tenure, he replaced half the editorial board, and hired several women, including Tina Rosenberg, who won a Pulitzer for her 1995 book, "The Haunted Ground"; Eleanor Randolph, who had been a reporter with the Washington *Post* and the Los Angeles *Times;* and Gail Collins. "He was very good at explaining things and how his own mind was working and how he got to a decision about things," Collins said. Brent Staples, who joined the board under Jack Rosenthal and stayed on with Raines, and who today is the only black member, said, "You never came away from a conversation with him feeling he played you cheap or he didn't respect your intelligence. Whether you wanted something or you argued with him, you came away feeling you'd been heard."

The most important audience, of course, was the publisher, and he was pleased with Raines's tenure. "There's a relentlessness about Howell that I admire," Sulzberger told me. "On the editorial page, he just wouldn't let Clinton off the hook. I would argue that he should not have." Sulzberger, who in 1997 replaced his father as chairman of the company, hastened to add, "That is not a rap on Max or Jack, but I think what we saw with the editorial page under Howell is a ratcheting up of its level of staking out clearly defined ground"—of stating its views without a lot of shading. Sulzberger says he sometimes looked at draft editorials and maybe, once a month or so, "made suggestions." The publisher is being too modest, several members of the editorial board say. "Arthur sometimes edited our pieces and Howell never told us," one board member says, not in anger but in appreciation for Raines's diplomacy.

THE COMPETITION

Raines's relationship with Joseph Lelyveld, who in July of 1994 succeeded Frankel as executive editor, was ostensibly smooth. Sulzberger told people he trusted that during seven years of Wednesday lunches, or at *Times* retreats and meetings, he never witnessed tension between them. Nor, he said, did either ever lobby him about the other. Raines and Lelyveld were aligned on certain issues, particularly against those on the business side who wanted to spin off the *Times'* news Web site as a standalone company. They agreed that such a move could undermine the paper's journalistic standards. At one *Times* retreat, Lelyveld invited Raines to spend the night at his weekend home, in Ulster County, New York.

But the relationship was never more than polite. When Frankel had announced, in early 1994, that he would step down a year before the mandatory retirement age, Raines partisans believed he did so to block Raines. They reason that Frankel, by leaving early—and little more than a year after Raines had moved to New York from Washington—made sure that his deputy, Lelyveld, would follow him. After Lelyveld was selected, he invited Raines to discuss the No. 2 job in the newsroom, the managing editorship. Corporate etiquette demanded the meeting, but it was an awkward encounter. Lelyveld had little interest in selecting Raines, and Raines had no interest in working under Lelyveld. "I had only been editorial-page editor for a year and a half," Raines said. "Also, if I came downstairs at the start of Joe's editorship, it would be unlikely that I would succeed him. You can pick up a lot of scar tissue in these jobs."

Lelyveld surprised the newsroom with his choice for managing editor: Gene Roberts, a retired Philadelphia *Inquirer* executive editor and a former *Times* national editor, who was sixty-one. In some ways, Roberts helped to crystallize the different management approaches of Raines and Lelyveld, who saw the masthead as Roberts did—as, in Roberts's word, "bureaucrats." Roberts added, "The whole point of Joe's administration, since Joe spent his life as a reporter there, was to keep his reporters from getting swallowed up by the bureaucracy and from getting second-guessed."

In 1999, the *Times* embarrassed itself with a series of accusatory stories, suggesting that a Los Alamos nuclear scientist, Wen Ho Lee, may have spied for China—coverage that eventually led to a long and mystifying editor's note. Raines told friends that many of the *Times'* reporting mistakes sprang from infighting between the Washington bureau and the science desk. Washington believed that Lee was guilty; the science reporters were dubious—and, Raines thought, no one on the masthead adjudicated. (Raines's editorial page assumed that Lee was guilty.)

Lelyveld left a distinguished legacy. He resisted salacious stories about President Clinton's sex life. He hired strong reporters, and deployed an army of reporters to provide illuminating coverage of, among many stories, the Florida recount after the 2000 Presidential election. But the differences between Lelyveld and Raines were substantive, and reflected two distinct personalities. Lelyveld wanted to publish longer pieces, one of his major efforts being a year-long reporting project that involved more than fifty people and produced a fifteen-part series, "How Race Is Lived in America," in 2000, which won a Pulitzer; he pushed for what he called "not-a-today story." Raines also wanted long pieces, but above all he wanted them to trigger news. In political coverage, Lelyveld put more emphasis on the words of the candidates and the opinions of voters; he was less interested than Raines was in tactics and drama. Raines believed that Lelyveld's approach to political reporting missed the Florentine flavor of politics, as captured in the L.B.J. photo montage displayed in his office. The assistant managing editor Andrew Rosenthal probably reflected Raines's view when he said, "I may regret saying this—I don't want to come off as critical of Joe—but the Gore campaign was profoundly hurt by a series of small stupid lies, and you won't find them in the New York *Times*."

For seven years, Raines and Lelyveld coexisted on their separate floors. Johnny Apple, who was friendly with both men, remembers that when he returned from the trip to South Africa with Raines, in 1995, Lelyveld "was very frosty to me."

"What's the matter with you?" Apple asked.

"I hear you were in South Africa," Lelyveld replied.

"That said to me that surely it was more than that I didn't call him," Apple observes. Lelyveld, who won a Pulitzer in 1986 for a book about South Africa, where he reported for the *Times*, may have been miffed at not being consulted about the trip, particularly since it was paid for out of his news budget. Lelyveld told some people that what annoyed him was "a Johnny Apple holiday dressed up as a reporting trip."

Apple can't explain the roots of the tension between two men he admires and feels close to. "I could never get either of them to confide in me," he said.

In the spring of 2001, Sulzberger invited Raines to dinner at Aquavit, a midtown restaurant that the publisher likes for its Scandinavian fare and a waterfall that prevents eavesdropping. Sulzberger had earlier tipped off Raines that Lelyveld had decided to retire in the fall, about six months before the mandatory age, and that Raines was a prime candidate to replace him. Now Sulzberger wanted to hear what Raines might do as editor.

Raines knew that his principal competitor was Bill Keller, the managing editor since 1997. Lelyveld had been best man at Keller's recent wedding, and Raines suspected that Lelyveld would champion his protégé's candidacy.

"The center of my plan for the paper," Raines told the publisher, "is to grow the national edition as our main vehicle for the future of the print paper . . . and also to move from passive to active coöperation in terms of extending our kind of quality journalism across digital, cable, and broadcast platforms"—from print to the *Times* Web site to television to radio. Raines knew that eighty-seven per cent of the paper's display-advertising revenue was coming from full-run national advertising, compared with just thirty-four per cent in 1996. He also knew that the *Times* was far ahead of its ten-year goal to boost daily circulation by two hundred and fifty thousand and Sunday's by three hundred thousand. And he knew that the Times Company owned seventeen daily newspapers, including the Boston *Globe*, eight TV stations in midsized markets, and two radio stations.

Raines saw the job as a management challenge, an assessment that appealed to Sulzberger. "I also felt that I would bring a style of closer personal engagement and interaction with the staff," Raines said. Above all, Raines concluded, his main task, like that of every previous executive editor, would be the "stewardship" of a great newspaper. He thought it could be a greater newspaper.

When Keller met with Sulzberger, he spoke of continuing what he and Lelyveld had started: a horizontal style of management which would reduce the size of the masthead and grant clear responsibilities to those who remained. Keller spoke of wanting a happy newsroom, and of expanding coverage of popular culture and the media. Sulzberger later confided to Lelyveld that, though he admired Keller as a newsman, he did not feel close to him. Lelyveld understood that Raines and Sulzberger had clicked on a personal level.

By May, Janet Robinson, the newspaper's president, whose office, on the fourteenth floor, is just down the corridor from Sulzberger's, had decided to support Raines, and told the publisher so. In addition to Robinson and Lelyveld, Sulzberger consulted his father, Arthur (Punch) Sulzberger, Sr.; his wife, Gail Gregg, an artist and a former journalist; his Times Company C.E.O., Russell Lewis; "one or two friends," including his 5:45 A.M. gym partner, the investment banker and former *Times* reporter Steven Rattner; and some members of the masthead. Sulzberger says he was so vexed by the choice that "I threw my back out" and took to bed. It was probably less difficult than he lets on. All along, Keller believed, and told friends, that Raines had the advantage.

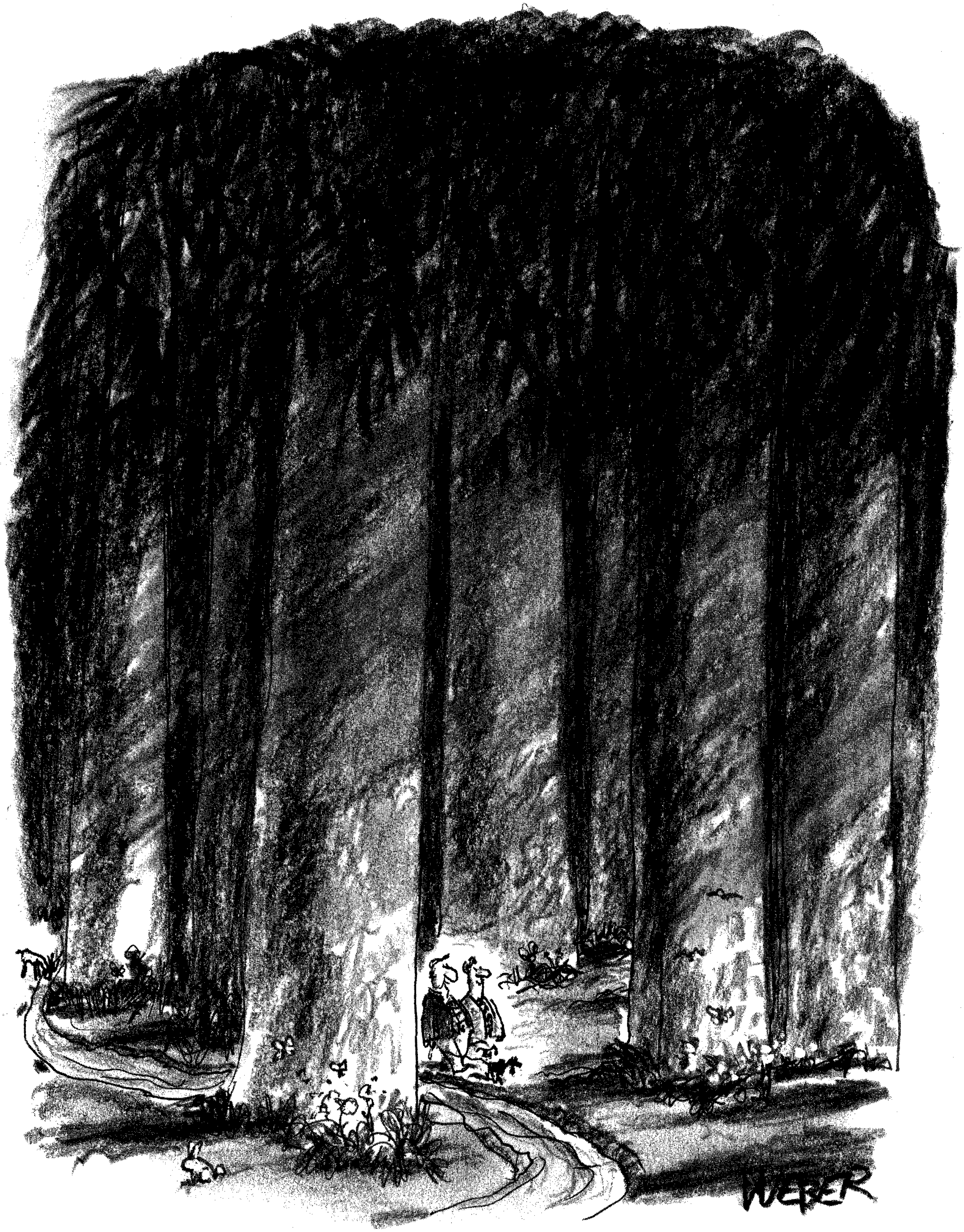
"I chose Howell in the end because I decided we needed a new pair of eyes," Sulzberger told me recently. "Joe really had made Bill his partner. That's a good thing. And while Bill did lay out a vision for what the newsroom would be under him—and how it would differ—I thought the time was right for a different step. . . . Any organization needs change to continue to improve, and that's part of my job, to assure that this organization has regular change."

Raines's age was also an advantage. At fifty-eight—six years older than Keller—he could serve no more than seven years. Sulzberger believed that the last editor to stay more than a decade, Abe Rosenthal, had become too authoritarian, especially at the end. He knew that he could select Raines and still consider Keller—or Gerald Boyd, Andrew Rosenthal (who is Abe Rosenthal's son), Michael Oreskes, Jon Landman, or Jill Abramson—down the road.

After Raines's appointment was announced, in May of 2001, Apple and his wife, Betsey, invited the Lelyvelds and Raines and Krystyna Stachowiak to dinner at Esca, an Italian seafood restaurant near the Times Building. There were a few jokes, Apple recalls, but mostly there were awkward silences. "It was clear to me that they found it difficult to be together in such a small group after all these years," Apple said.

COURSE CORRECTIONS

By January of 2002, colleagues were used to seeing Raines, wearing a hat, enter the Times Building around 10 A.M., taking furious little steps up to the conference room on the fourth floor. Everyone had heard a Bear Bryant story, or his favorite exhortation: "Let's commit some journalism here!" Many had tried to peer into the two narrow glass panels of his office to see if he was



"I smell petroleum reserves."

at his desk; he rarely wandered around the newsroom. Sometimes, at the end of the day, editors, and occasionally reporters, were invited into the small room behind his office to share a drink—preferably bourbon, Scotch, or gin. This practice, along with Raines's frequent sports and military references, had begun to make some women in the newsroom uncomfortable.

Raines believes that January marked the real beginning of his new job—when he could concentrate on his agenda at the paper. Joe Lelyveld enjoys high culture—opera, concerts, recitals—and he had the like-minded John Rockwell edit the Sunday Arts & Leisure section. Under Raines, the newsroom began to notice a greater emphasis on popular culture and life style. An early hint of this change had come in December, when Rockwell was encouraged to step down. Rockwell is a gifted writer—and a former rock critic—but there was broad support in the newsroom for a section more balanced between high culture and popular culture. Even so, there was concern about Raines's tastes. "What makes the *Times* distinctive is foreign news and cultural news," one senior editor says. "That's what people outside New York find missing from their own local newspapers." This editor worried that in its quest for a national audience the *Times*, like the television networks, could end up making marketing-driven decisions.

The newsroom took notice when stories about Botox injections and supermodels attending World Economic Forum parties appeared on page 1, or when tensions between Lawrence H. Summers, the new president of Harvard, and Cornel West, of the Afro-American Studies department, were given repeated front-page treatment. To some inside the *Times*, the way Raines played the Cornel West story suggested that he and Sulzberger were allowing their own views to intrude, particularly on racial matters. At the March 15th page-one meeting, Jon Landman, the metro editor, proposed running an exclusive story about the controversial findings of a state-sponsored study in New Jersey which concluded that blacks are more likely to speed than other drivers. The story cited testimony that racial profiling was real, but it added a level of complexity to the familiar narrative.

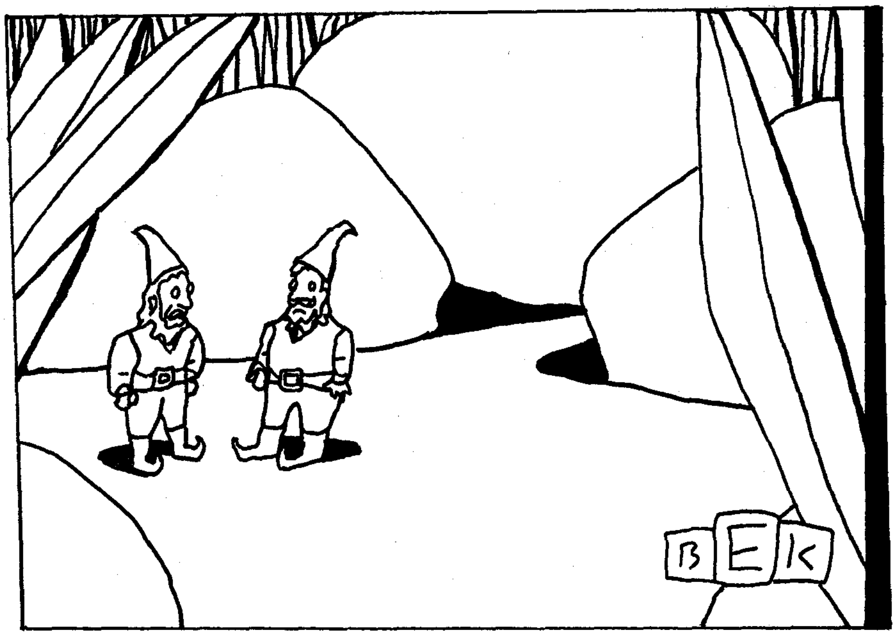
Raines said that he was troubled that the *Times* did not have the actual study (though the newspaper sometimes publishes accounts of studies it hasn't seen), and after the meeting he stopped by Gerald Boyd's office to say that he had other problems with the story; he believed, as federal officials did, that the study's methodology was flawed, and he worried that the newspaper was being "spun." By 8:30 P.M., Boyd reported back that there were, indeed, flaws in the story and that it would be put on hold. The exclusive did not appear until March 21st, and then not on page 1 but on the first page of the metro section. I asked Landman if Raines was being politically correct by holding the story. Landman wouldn't answer. "You'll have to draw your own conclusions," he said.

Raines, however, was enthusiastic about Landman and his metro staff; he did not feel that way about the national staff. To capture what Raines called "the pulse" of a region and the nation, he wanted reporters in the ten domestic bureaus to travel more. He saw a business reason for mobility as well. If the national edition was to grow, the paper needed more bylines from more places. Raines was frustrated with particular bureaus, especially Los Angeles, because he considered its coverage of Hollywood to be soft. By the spring, Raines had appointed a new L.A. bureau chief—John Broder—and added to the bureau a talented metro reporter, Charlie LeDuff.

Traditionally, bureau chiefs were rotated every three to five years. Kevin Sack, however, the Atlanta bureau chief, had been in his post for five years, and in the bureau for almost seven, and wanted to remain in the city. A popular, respected reporter, Sack had been hired away from the Atlanta *Constitution*, partly on the recommendation of Raines. In August of 2001, Sack had told Raines that he couldn't leave Atlanta; he was going through a divorce and had an eight-year-old daughter whom he saw only one night a week and every other weekend. Sack was willing to give up the bureau-chief job, but asked to stay

"With your kind permission, I've taken the liberty of putting Marvin on 'mute.'"

in Atlanta, perhaps until his daughter graduated from high school. Raines said that he thought the paper had made too many private deals, that fairness required him to rotate people, and that he and Lelyveld had agreed on this point. In January, Jill Abramson made what Sack told friends was a "great" job offer: he would cover politics in Washington—and Abramson promised that he could see his daughter on weekends. But a week later Sack turned down the offer, and later left the *Times*. From August to February, Sack and Raines never spoke.



"I can't live in a glen that has such a narrow definition of what it is to be elfin."

As Sack began looking for another job, word of his predicament travelled through the newsroom. Few people there knew that this was not an abrupt decision, or that Sack had been offered a job in Washington. Reporters who agreed with Raines that the rotation of correspondents was only fair nevertheless fretted that the *Times* was becoming unfriendly to families, that senior people were getting pushed out to pasture. Raines's real message, one editor said, was that there are no special deals, but "the message received was 'Nobody's safe.' " In April, Kevin Sack joined the Los Angeles *Times* as a national correspondent. "They'll allow me to stay in Atlanta indefinitely," he said.

As a general rule, newsrooms are wary precincts. During the day, reporters anxiously follow editors in and out of their offices, up and down stairs, and notice when they enter and leave. Ben Bradlee, when he was the executive editor of the Washington *Post*, used to walk around the newsroom and call out, "Morale check, morale check!" He remembered, "I'd see two guys talking, and you wanted to know what the hell they were talking about. Sometimes you waited until the third guy joined them, because the two guys may be talking about you. You got to know what they're talking about. An editor is a lot like a coach. You wouldn't coach the football team without knowing that your guard is not talking to your tackle."

By late this winter, the anxiety level at the *Times* had grown. "There is enormous resentment, the likes of which I've never seen," someone who's been at the paper for thirty years told me. Perhaps not since Abe Rosenthal's last, autocratic years had the din of newsroom complaint been as loud. Reporters joked that Raines "was Southern-fried Abe." Arthur Gelb, who has just completed "City Room," a memoir of more than fifty years at the *Times*, observes that every *Times* editor is criticized by the newsroom. When Gelb started at the paper, in 1944, as a nineteen-year-old copy boy, the complaint about the first top editor he knew, Edwin L. James, "was that he wasn't accessible and hid in his office so he didn't have to give raises. Next was Turner Catledge, and the complaint was that he was away from the office a lot. Next was Clifton Daniel, and the complaint was that he was haughty. Then came Scotty Reston, who people thought was pontifical. Then came Abe. He was thought to be too demanding. Then Max was perceived as too theoretical and not impulsive enough in jumping on news. Joe was perceived as too aloof. Now Howell is perceived as moving too fast. The pendulum is that you're either too tough and enthusiastic or too laid-back and unenthusiastic."

Jon Landman, who respects Raines and the energy he has brought to the newsroom, is among those who were sometimes uneasy with the peremptory tone of the masthead's edicts to section editors. Landman is popular and respected because he is unafraid to speak his mind; Bill Keller has said that if he had been made executive editor he probably would have picked Landman as his managing editor. Landman is also a favorite with Raines, for whom he worked in the Washington bureau. "There is nothing wrong with the executive editor having story ideas," Landman told me. "The problem is when these story ideas become commands and overwhelm everything else. . . . There's a feeling of a one-way windstorm." He worried that reporters and editors would become "tentative."

By late February, there was concern that Raines was trying to shake up a great institution so vigorously that he might damage it. "How hard can you shake it before it cracks?" one experienced correspondent asked. Every time Raines talked about speeding up "the metabolism" of the paper and attacking "complacency," many staff members felt they were under assault. Landman, like many others, interpreted Raines's comments as suggesting that the *Times* was somehow broken and needed to be fixed. "When you use phrases like 'metabolism' and 'complacency,' it's unmistakable," he said. Landman believed that the *Times* was a greater paper last year than it had been the year before, or the year before that. What many in the newsroom heard, he said, "was as-

"Here comes the ambassador now!"

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saultive. It sounded contemptuous"—not, he thinks, the message Raines meant to send.

Word even filtered up to the fourteenth floor, to Sulzberger, who joked to friends, "I'm hearing 'Abe's back'!" Not that Sulzberger was displeased. When he became publisher, in 1992, he felt that a cultural revolution was needed at the *Times*, and he held retreats to advance his belief. "Any executive or manager has only two drawers in his desk," Sulzberger says. "One says 'Centralize,' and the other says 'Decentralize.' There is no third drawer. And there's no right or wrong. It's balance that you want. Different times need different approaches."

Before each page-one meeting, senior editors receive a "frontings" memorandum, containing drafts and summaries of stories that each department is working on which might qualify for page 1. In the conference room, Boyd, the managing editor, sits in the middle of a long table, and Raines sits to his far left at one end, under a white board used to display pictures. On the surface, these meetings seem relaxed, and begin when Boyd calls on each department head or a deputy to make his pitch. In truth, the editors are tense, because they are fearful of being quizzed by Raines or another editor and of not knowing enough about their own story.

On Friday, February 15th, nearly three dozen editors crowded into the conference room. They all knew that Raines was keenly interested in the Winter Olympics. Before this year's skating scandal, he had demanded that the sports department produce a story about the subjectivity of the judges, and it had run on page 1; the *Times* had sent twenty-four people to Salt Lake City, including four correspondents from outside the sports department. Now Boyd turned to Neil Amdur, the sports editor, who described the International Skating Union's decision to reverse the judges and award a second gold medal to a Canadian pair in figure skating, and to suspend a French skating judge for misconduct.

"What is it about this that broke the I.O.C.'s high level of tolerance for shenanigans?" Raines asked. "To me, this is a watershed time for the Olympics. . . . Somewhere, we have to get all that together for the reader." He wanted a news-analysis piece, and worried that sports did not know how to write a broad, authoritative account that would mix skating, politics, and diplomacy.

Boyd then addressed a couple of other editors before Raines said that he wanted to go back to sports. He referred to the news-analysis piece that he wanted, and asked, "Neil, can we write about the Olympics without using the word 'firestorm' anywhere in the story?"

"Ice storm?" Amdur replied, amid laughter. Raines laughed, too. (Later, however, he said that he wanted a Johnny Apple-style analysis. "That's not something they're used to producing in that department," he said. Among themselves, members of the sports department complained that correspondents covering the Games had to wait until after the masthead met to get their marching orders.)

After finishing with sports, Boyd asked for the foreign-desk report, and Alison Smale, the British-born assistant foreign editor (who has since been promoted to deputy), offered several candidates, among them a story from Afghanistan about the assassination of a minister in the post-Taliban government. After addressing the other desks, including photo, Boyd looked at Al Siegal, who usually sits at the table across from him, and said, "All right, what do we like?" They were looking for seven stories worthy of the front page, including one especially interesting or well-written story. Most of all, they were searching for the one story to lead the paper—in the upper right-hand corner.

Siegal appeared to have no doubts, and said that the Afghan story should lead the paper, and that is probably what most of the editors thought. Certainly it would be the traditional *Times* lead.

"The Olympics is the biggest story of the day," Raines countered. No one challenged him.

The skating story led the Saturday-morning front page, with an extraordinary four-column headline. There was also news about the murder in Afghanistan, the secret sale of a hundred million dollars in Enron stock by its C.E.O., and the use by China of mental hospitals to incarcerate dissidents. Later, however, one senior editor said that he was disturbed. "Never in a hundred years would that story have led the paper," he said. "It did because Howell thought it was the most interesting story. In the past, it would have been seen as not having enough gravitas." Siegal, he continued, "was trying to steer Howell to the most important lead, but he backed off." Why? Because editors—himself included—are afraid to confront Raines, he said.

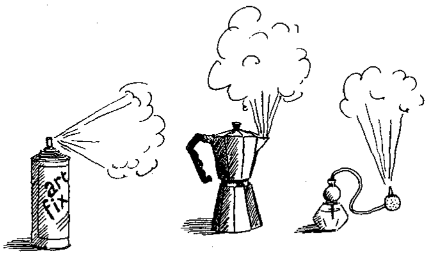
The Enron scandal crystallized what the newsroom admired about Raines, and also what it found alarming, as he pressed editors to produce page-one stories. He wanted editors "to forget turf lines," the assistant managing editor Carolyn Lee says. "Howell wants speed." He wanted the Washington and the Houston bureaus, the national desk, and legal correspondents to get involved, as he asked for separate stories and also for long narratives that would give readers what Raines calls "one-stop-shopping pieces." He told his business editors, "The Enron story is going to be your World Trade Center story."

Others thought the coverage was excessive. People worried that "flooding the zone" could mean diverting resources from other stories, thus losing a sense of proportion. In February, Raines held a lunch with Glenn Kramon and the business staff, and in his opening remarks talked only about Enron, mentioning none of the other stories they had produced.

The preoccupation with Enron sometimes overshadowed other business stories; for instance, in late January, Kramon argued that the "most important business story today" was not about Enron but about how H.M.O.s were curbing health coverage for the elderly. Nevertheless, Enron made page 1, and the sort of populist, people-getting-victimized story that Raines usually relishes—the type of story that, before the Enron scandal broke, would have produced an indignant editorial—appeared in the business section. One reporter observed that under Raines the *Times* "is a more exciting place to work," but she worried that there was "a lot of reporting on the moment." Raines, who has become a Kramon fan, defends himself from this sort of criticism. "Do I think we've had too much Enron in the paper?" he said. "It's a huge story, and it's a story of as much sociological significance potentially as the great populist reaction to the abuses of the Gilded Age."

In early March, Raines became concerned that he needed to strike a better balance. He knew that he had to spend more time praising his predecessors and his editors, and that he had to reveal his thinking to more people in the newsroom. When he was told that editors believed his message was that the paper was broken, he responded, "That's delusional! The paper is stronger than it's ever been."

Raines started meeting each Tuesday morning with the department editors; he accelerated a practice, begun in the fall but only sporadically adhered to, of lunching with various departments. One of these lunches, held on March 15th in an eleventh-floor executive dining room, was attended by twenty-six members of the national and foreign staff. "The biggest lesson I've learned since I became the executive editor is that there is real value for me in talking to the staff and real value in having time to answer your questions," Raines said. He spoke of the accomplishments of his predecessors. "You hear me talking about raising our 'competitive metabolism.' That's not because I feel we've failed in any way. It's not an invidious comparison to anything that's gone on before." For the next hour and fifteen minutes, he fielded questions from a staff that did not seem intimidated.



Early that evening, in the small room behind his office, Raines settled into an armchair, and I asked him if he had softened his message in the past few weeks. He conceded that he had. "I always thought that if you covered politics twenty or thirty years you ought to learn something," he said. "I thought one day I would get a job where I didn't make any rookie mistakes, and, since I figured this was my last job, I guessed that I was safe. One mistake I made is that I have an intensity, and . . . in my enthusiasm for this work my passion sometimes comes across as a harshness, or my intensity gets mistaken for an adversarial or aggressive instinct that I don't have." He admitted that his "metabolism" message had been misconstrued and left "people feeling stressed or agitated."

Three days later, Raines's charm-and-humility offensive continued, when he presided over a two-day newsroom retreat for about eighty senior editors, in White Plains, New York. He opened the proceedings by reading a speech that began, "I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your patience and good humor and professional support during my on-the-job training as executive editor. . . . I do hereby declare that, as far as I'm concerned, our competitive metabolism has been raised!"

At the *Times*, the question of continued profitability is a constant one. Company revenues, compared with those of such media giants as AOL Time Warner and News Corp., appear puny: three billion dollars in 2001. Yet the *Times* does have one of the largest documentary television-production companies in the United States, and its Web site, nytimes.com, is the No. 1 newspaper site in the world. The *Times,* in a joint venture with Holt, has relaunched Times Books, which had been a Random House imprint. The paper's correspondents will soon be told of a new policy that discourages staff members from submitting book proposals to other publishers. "We are putting more emphasis on New York *Times* writers giving Times Books a first crack at efforts growing from their work for the *Times,*" Raines told me. "The guts of it is that we want first refusal."

Yet the principal focus of the *Times* remains what Sulzberger calls the "fine art of slathering ink on dead trees." In mid-March, Sulzberger devoted most of his weekly Wednesday lunch to newspaper growth. At the beginning of the year, the *Times* had learned that the *Wall Street Journal* planned to introduce, on April 9th, a thrice-weekly section, Personal Journal, aimed at broadening the paper's appeal to both readers and advertisers. To counter this move, the five executives at the Wednesday lunch—Sulzberger, Raines, Robinson, Boyd, and Collins—decided to hurry what were still vague plans for a new section; they wanted it to appear before the *Journal's*, offering stories on second homes, real estate, and travel and life style for upscale readers.

Escapes, as the section was called, had an inauspicious début; it seemed rushed, geared more to advertisers than to readers—not quite a real section. When Paul D. Colford, of the *News*, asked whether the new section was related to the *Journal's*, Gerald Boyd insisted, straight-faced, that it was not. It was "related to the *Times*," he said, which had desired "for a long time to present readers with a smart way of packaging some of the things you now see in the *Times* in different places."

At an earlier March retreat, for desk editors and their business-side counterparts, Raines said that he hoped to find "a marquee national columnist, on the model of Red Smith or Jimmy Cannon," to write about college sports. (He didn't say it, but he also hopes to expand the *Times*' daily sports coverage, which is only about half what *USA Today* offers.) He added that he wanted to increase the *Times*' coverage of the immigrant communities and the New York City school system.

There are other changes that Raines didn't talk about at this retreat. In April, he appointed Patrick Tyler chief correspondent in Washington, and he has told people he trusts that in a year or so he plans to promote Jill Abramson to a masthead or major department post, and then to name Tyler bureau chief. In coming days, he expects to appoint Adam Nagourney the national political correspondent, replacing Richard L. Berke, who was recently made deputy Washington bureau chief. He wants to return to the "Walter Kerr model" and have a separate Sunday theatre critic. At first, he believed that three movie reviewers were too many, and worried that none had the authority of the late Vincent Canby; he does not want all three to appear on the same day and wants them writing on broader subjects as well. He is impressed with the *Times Magazine* and is pleased with the three full-time book critics. As a rule of thumb, if a critic doesn't command attention—as he feels that the book reviewer Michiko Kakutani does, or as the former drama critic Frank Rich did—he will step in. He will soon hire a new Weekend editor from inside the paper, and is looking inside as well as outside for a new Arts & Leisure editor. He plans to shift Alessandra Stanley, who has reported from Moscow and Rome, to a highly visible role writing about television. He says that he plans no major changes before the summer, when a few editors might be rotated, but it is inevitable that bigger changes will come.

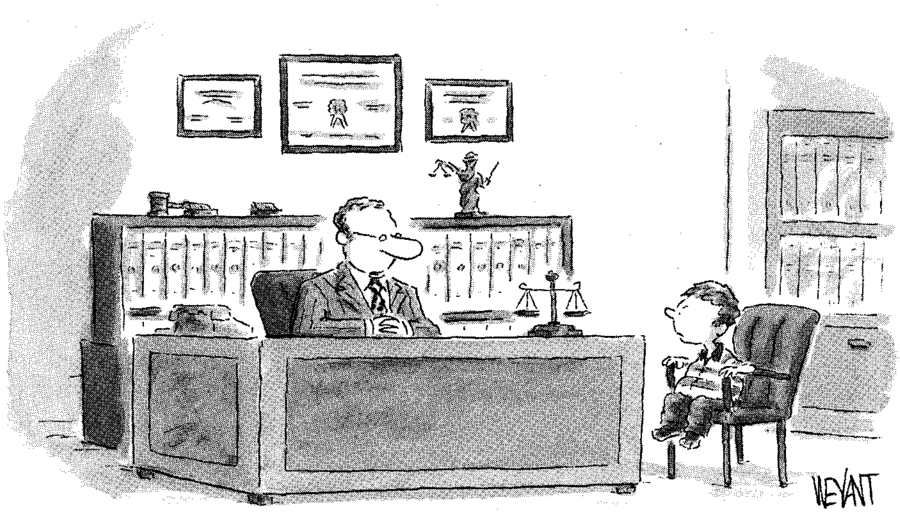
THE CELEBRATION

Except for a few technicians setting up the microphone, the newsroom was unusually quiet at 2:30 P.M. on April 8th. *Times* personnel were waiting to gather for the announcement of the 2002 Pulitzer Prizes, although the outcome was no surprise: Sulzberger and Raines had learned the previous week that the paper had won an unprecedented seven. Now Joe Lelyveld appeared in a blazer and dark-gray slacks; he went over to his former office and tapped on the narrow window. Raines hurried out and they embraced. Soon, Raines was hugging Max Frankel, Abe Rosenthal, Bill Keller, Arthur Sulzberger, Sr., and Arthur Sulzberger, Jr. By two-fifty-five, hundreds of staff members had surged into the newsroom, leaning against desks and file cabinets, crowding the DMZ staircase, and pressing toward the microphone to create an air of intimacy in what is, essentially, a fluorescent-lit factory room whose ceiling pipes are painted over in eggshell white. This was the first time that all living former executive editors and the current and former publisher had attended a newsroom event together. Abe Rosenthal, who hadn't been in the newsroom since the paper dropped his column, in November of 1999, stood beside Raines, wearing a bright-red bow tie. Then everyone waited for Columbia University to make its Pulitzer announcement, at 3 P.M.

Minutes later, Raines went to the microphone and hopped onto a small platform. He wore a white shirt and a red striped tie and was smiling broadly.

Gahan Wilson

"The tide is coming in, sweetheart!"



"I'm sorry, Timothy, but there's no use suing over spilt milk, either."

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As if he had willed it, for the next hour few phones beeped, no major news erupted. Raines didn't look at the notes he had scrawled on yellow paper as he said, "I was reminded today of the words of Mississippi's greatest moral philosopher, Dizzy Dean, who said, 'It ain't braggin' if you really done it!' Ladies and gentlemen of the New York *Times*, you've really done it!" Raines spoke about his predecessors in the newsroom—"We are living links in an unbroken chain of commitment"—and singled out Joe Lelyveld and Bill Keller. Applause filled the room as Lelyveld, who was leaning against a file cabinet next to Sulzberger, Sr., smiled demurely. Raines called Sulzberger, Jr., "a great publisher," and gave him a bear hug as the room applauded again.

Sulzberger asked the room to fall silent out of respect for the victims of September 11th and its aftermath, including journalists like Daniel Pearl, of the *Wall Street Journal*, who was murdered by Islamic terrorists. When he spoke again, he said, "Howell mentioned a lot of the folks on whose shoulders we stand, but he forgot one"—deliberately, Raines later said—"and I'm grateful that he did, and that is my father." The applause reached its peak, and the older Sulzberger had no place to hide, which is clearly what he wanted to do; the gray, slightly stooped patriarch, who had a bright-red ribbon looped around his neck holding an I.D. badge, blushed and engaged in nervous chatter with another painfully shy man, Lelyveld. At most newspapers, publishers are the ones responsible for cutbacks that boost profit margins. At the *Times*, the Sulzbergers are royalty.

Roger Cohen, who had recently been promoted to foreign editor, introduced Barry Bearak, whose stories from Afghanistan won a Pulitzer for international reporting. After thanking Celia Dugger, his wife and the co-chief of the New Delhi bureau, Bearak said, "I've read a great many wonderful stories that didn't make the Pulitzer Prizes; many of them were written by people who are in this room, many of them were written by my colleagues who were in Afghanistan this year."

C. J. Chivers was one of those colleagues in Afghanistan, but he had never met Bearak, because they travelled separate roads. But as he stood listening to him he was moved. "I'll remember this as long as I have a memory," he said. "After everything he had been through and has done for the newspaper and the risks he's taken, he was talking about the larger institution, and not himself."

Jon Landman stood to accept the Public Service Prize awarded to the section A Nation Challenged, which included its daily "Portraits of Grief." He spoke briefly, then raised a plastic champagne cup and said, "Make a toast to whoever is standing next to you, and to yourself."

All the nervousness about the executive editor took a vacation on that afternoon. "What a day. I'm so proud of you all. I'm so proud of us," Raines said when he returned to the platform. He recalled the advice that Landman had offered about what he should say. " 'Whatever you do, ban all sports metaphors!' " Landman told him. Raines ignored the advice. "Whenever anyone congratulated Coach Bryant"—he was interrupted by laughter, and paused—"on winning a game, he always said the same thing: 'I didn't play a single down. The team won the game.' " Raines lifted his glass.

Raines knew that the difference between a great coach and a good coach was often a matter of inches. That day, morale soared at the *Times*, but he knew that it might plunge again—as it did a few weeks later, when the newsroom learned that the investigative editor Stephen Engelberg, who won his third Pulitzer this year, was leaving to become a managing editor at the Portland *Oregonian*. The newsroom blamed Raines for losing Engelberg, as it blamed him for losing Kevin Sack—believing that Raines could have done more to keep them. Engelberg had not been happy with Raines last fall, but the strain between them had eased; he told those he trusted that his move had little to do with the new editor, who had offered him a promotion. It was a "life-style decision," Engelberg told friends, explaining that it would be a good situation for his three young daughters, his wife would be working for the *Oregonian* herself, and they would be closer to his wife's family. In an odd way, the seven Pulitzers also worried newsroom veterans. Would Raines become more cocksure?

Raines wasn't happy about these doubts, but he insisted that his focus was on improving his newspaper. "Change always takes people out of their comfort zone," Raines said one evening, over a glass of bourbon and water in his small back room. "I'm not rattled by the friction of the moment. You have to set your sights on a beacon that is a journalistic ideal, and it's important not to get knocked off course by those winds of criticism. The caricature of me that I see in some of these accounts is completely unrecognizable to me. And therefore not particularly disturbing. I know who I am and I know where I will come out." ♦

LETTER FROM KABUL

THE ASSASSINS

Who was involved in the murder of Ahmed Shah Massoud?

BY JON LEE ANDERSON

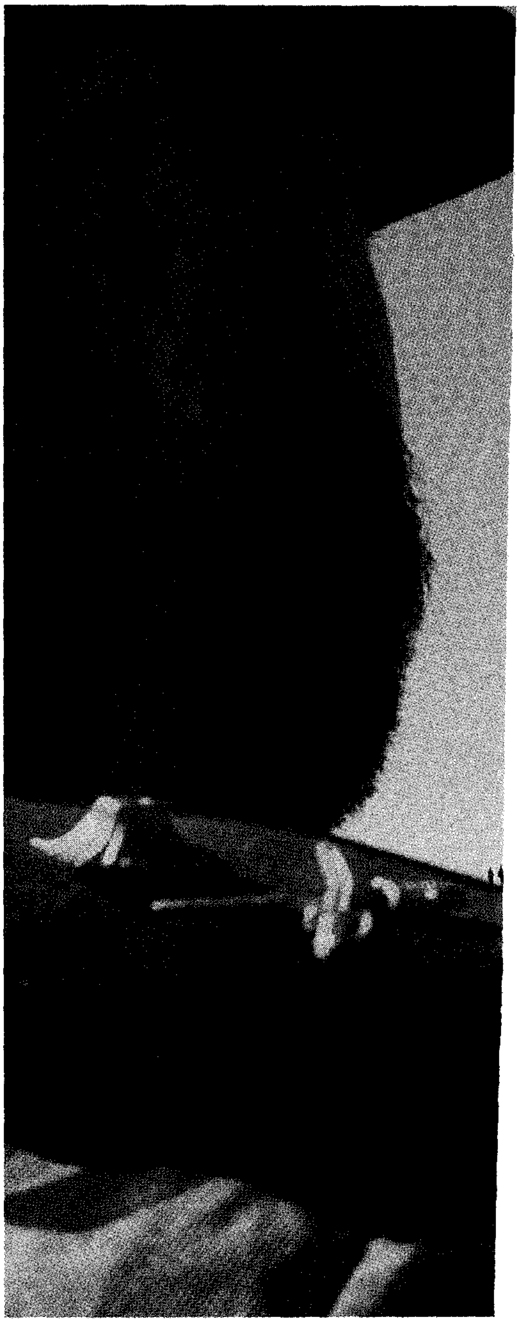
Ahmed Shah Massoud was a wiry, thin-boned man with a long, handsome face that was distinguished by an aquiline nose and by deep furrows in the cheeks and around the eyes. He usually wore a *pakul*, a kind of flat-topped, soft wool hat that he and his mujahideen had adopted from the Nuristani tribe, a pale-skinned people who claim to be descendants of Alexander the Great's army, in northeastern Afghanistan. In the fall of last year, Massoud was forty-nine years old, and a dramatic white streak had appeared in his dark hair, above his left temple.

Massoud had been at war pretty much steadily since 1975, when he and several other anti-Communist Islamist students made a series of botched attacks on outposts of the government of Mohammad Daud. King Zahir Shah had been overthrown by Daud two years earlier, and Daud himself was ousted and killed in a coup in 1978. In December of 1979, the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Massoud was the most charismatic military leader of the decade-long jihad against the Soviets that followed. He was a brilliant tactician, and his popularity helped his party, the Jamiat-i-Islami, take the leading role in the mujahideen government that ruled Afghanistan in the early nineteen-nineties. But no one was able to establish control over the various Afghan political and ethnic factions for very long, and by early September, 2001, the Taliban had pressed Massoud's forces—a coalition of mainly Persian-speaking groups then known as the Northern Alliance—into the northeastern corner of the country. The front line extended from the edge of the Shamali plain, which lies between the Panjshir Valley and Kabul, up to the Tajik border, where Massoud had his headquarters, in a little smugglers' town named Khoja Bahauddin.

That summer, Massoud had begun receiving intelligence reports that a large number of Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters, as many as sixteen thousand, were massing along his northernmost front, among them many Arabs, Pakistanis, Chinese, Uzbeks, and Tajiks. These numbers seemed preposterously inflated, and he dismissed them. Early in September, he and several of his commanders flew over the front line in a helicopter. Massoud sat in the cockpit with binoculars. It was a dangerous trip, one of the men who was with him recalled recently, "but we knew that Allah would help us and that Amur Sahib"—a phrase meaning, more or less, Big Boss, which is what Massoud's men called him—"was with us." They photographed the area, and Massoud instructed his commanders where to position their men.

Massoud stayed up reading Persian poetry aloud with several colleagues until three in the morning on September 9th. A few minutes after he went to sleep, his personal secretary—a young man named Jamshid, who was also his nephew and his brother-in-law—received a call from a Northern Alliance commander, Bismillah Khan, saying that the Taliban had attacked the Shamali front. Jamshid woke Massoud up, and Massoud and Bismillah Khan talked on the phone until daybreak. Then Massoud went back to bed. Around seven-thirty, Jamshid learned that the Taliban were in retreat, and he let his uncle sleep until nine.

After breakfast, Massoud was about to leave on a reconnaissance trip when he decided to see two Arab journalists who had come to Khoja Bahauddin from the Panjshir Valley nine days earlier and had been waiting to interview him. They had sent word that they had to leave Khoja Bahauddin that day. The Arabs had arrived with a letter of introduction from the director of an organization called the Islamic Observation Centre, in London. Jamshid says that he was also contacted by a man who worked for Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, one of the founders of the Afghan Islamist movement, who now commanded a thousand-odd anti-Taliban fighters from a base in the Panjshir. Jamshid was told that the Arabs were friends of Sayyaf's.



In late April, in a military parade in Kabu

I asked Jamshid if he had noticed anything unusual about the Arabs, since most Arabs in Afghanistan at the time were associated with Al Qaeda.

"No," he said. And his uncle thought they could be of use. "He wanted to say through them to the Muslim world, 'We are not *kafirs*' "—unbelievers—" 'we are Muslims, and we don't have Russians and Iranians fighting here.' " Massoud was religious. He prayed five times a day, in the orthodox fashion, and his wife

Ahmed Shah Massoud's image loomed over Hamid Karzai, the interim President of Afghanistan. Photographs by Thomas Dworzak.

wore a burkha. But he was a Sunni Muslim at war with other Sunni Muslims—the Taliban—and they professed to be righteous and incorruptible, while he had accepted support from Iranian Shiites and from non-Muslim governments.

Fahim Dashty, a slender young man who is now the editor of a multilingual newspaper in Kabul, was also in Khoja Bahauddin on September 9th. Dashty had known Massoud since he was a small boy. In the fall of 1996, when the Taliban took Kabul, Dashty joined Massoud's retreat to the Panjshir Valley. He stayed in Northern Alliance territory and formed a small film company, Ariana, with one of Massoud's commanders. They made documentaries about Massoud's war with the Taliban. Dashty had just come back from a two-month stay in Paris, where he participated in a workshop on film editing sponsored by the group Reporters Without Borders. He stayed in the same guesthouse as the two Arabs. He remembers thinking that it was odd to see Arabs in Northern Alliance territory, but that these two didn't seem suspicious. "They had gone to refugee camps, and to visit prisoners—all the things journalists do," he said. One of them spoke a little French and English, the other only Arabic.

A few weeks ago, I was shown a rough cut of Ariana's most recent film about Massoud. The two Arabs are in some of the scenes. In footage shot in August, they are interviewing Burhanuddin Rabbani, the President of the mujahideen government that had been ousted by the Taliban. The putative reporter is a fair-skinned, muscular man who appears to be in his mid-thirties. He is clean-shaven and has a crewcut. He wears Western clothes—a brown shirt and slacks—and glasses. He has two odd brownish marks, like round scars, on his forehead. The cameraman isn't visible in this scene, but later in the film there is a still shot of him in the doorway of the guesthouse. He is tall and dark-skinned. He is wearing a black shirt and is glaring at the camera, with what one can easily imagine is both hate and fear.

The Ariana team usually filmed Massoud's interviews, and around noon on September 9th Fahim Dashty and the two Arabs and their translator drove over to Massoud's headquarters. Massoud and Jamshid were there with two other men—the chief of security, whose office was being used for the interview, and Massoud Khalili, the Northern Alliance's ambassador to India. Ahmed Shah Massoud was sitting on a sofa, using an orthopedic cushion that helped alleviate his chronic back pain. He said hello to the Arabs. "He asked them where they were from," Dashty said. "One of them said they were Belgian but were born in Morocco, and that they had come from Pakistan to Kabul and from there to Khoja Bahauddin."

Ambassador Khalili recalled that Massoud told the Arab who was to conduct the interview that he would like to hear the list of questions first, and the man began to read them out in English. Khalili translated into Persian for Massoud. He said that he was rather surprised that most of the questions had to do with Osama bin Laden—for example, "What will you do with Osama bin Laden if you take power?" and "Why do you call him a fundamentalist?" The Ambassador found the questions tendentious, and he asked the Arab what paper he worked for. "I am not a journalist," the man replied. "I am from the Islamic centers. We have offices in London and Paris and all over the world." Khalili turned to Massoud and whispered, "Commander, they are from those guys"—meaning Al Qaeda or some other Muslim extremist group. Massoud nodded, and said, tersely, "Let's just get through with it."

The Arabs had moved a table and some chairs that were between Massoud and their camera, which they had positioned on the lowest level of the tripod. Dashty, who had set up his camera behind theirs, began filming. He was adjusting his backlight when the room exploded. Ambassador Khalili said that he saw a thick blue fire coming toward him.

"I felt I was burning," Dashty said. He went outside and saw Jamshid, who had left the room with the chief of security a few minutes earlier. "I asked him to take me to the hospital, and he asked me where Mr. Massoud was, and I went back inside and saw him. He was very badly injured all over his body, his face, his hands and legs." An Afghan intelligence officer told me recently that Massoud must have died within thirty seconds. Two pieces of metal were lodged in his heart. Most of the fingers of his right hand had been blown off. I was shown a photograph of his body. Every other inch of his skin was ruptured in open wounds. White gauze had been stuffed into his eye sockets.

The cameraman's battery belt had been packed with explosives. The sofa that Massoud had been sitting on was charred, and a hole had been blasted through the back. In the Ariana film, there is a shot of the cameraman's body on a stretcher. His legs are scorched and bloody and the upper part of his body seems to have been blown apart. The Afghan translator was also killed.

Two bodyguards carried Massoud to his car. Dashty, who was badly burned, got in, and they drove to the helicopter pad. Ambassador Khalili, who was also burned and had been hit heavily by shrapnel, followed in another car. They were all flown to a hospital across the border in Tajikistan, where General Fahim, Massoud's second-in-command, soon arrived. Fahim conferred with other Northern Alliance officials, and they agreed that the assassination should be kept a secret for the time being.

The Arab who did the interviewing had survived the blast and was put in a room nearby. He tore the wire-mesh screen from a small window and wriggled through, then ran across a graveyard to a steep river embankment a few hundred yards away. A man who worked for a local warlord chased him and killed him.

I asked Dashty if he believed that Massoud had been betrayed. "Yes," he said. "It would have been impossible otherwise. Somehow, I think, there was contact between Al Qaeda and our guys."

On September 11th, at around 8 P.M. in Afghanistan, Mullah Omar, who was in Kandahar, called the Taliban foreign minister in Kabul. According to Afghan intelligence sources, who intercepted the call, Mullah Omar said, "Things have gone much further than expected." It was 11:30 A.M. in New York, less than three hours after American Airlines Flight 11 had crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center, and an hour and a half after the south tower had collapsed. Mullah Omar told the foreign minister to call a press conference to say that the Taliban had not been involved in the attack. The press conference took place at 9:30 P.M. in Kabul. The foreign minister assured reporters that Afghanistan had not attacked the United States, and he read a statement by Mullah Omar saying that Osama bin Laden was not involved: "This type of terrorism is too great for one man."

Among the calls intercepted that night was one from Kabul to Kandahar. "Where's the Sheikh?" the caller asked. Sheikh was the code name that senior Taliban officials used for Osama bin Laden. Again according to Afghan intelligence sources, someone in Mullah Omar's house told the caller that bin Laden was there. "Then, afterward," an intelligence officer said to me, "there was a chaos of phone calls back and forth between Kandahar and Kabul."

It seemed obvious during those early days in September that the assassination of Massoud on the ninth and the attack on the World Trade Center two days later were somehow related, but exactly how they were related and who was involved continues to be the subject of speculation. Massoud's younger brother, Wali, was in London when he was killed. Wali was the chargé d'affaires at the Afghan Embassy, which was still run by the Rabbani government. Wali is now in Kabul, and has been nominated to lead a Massoudist party, the National Movement of Afghanistan. He believes that the assassination of his brother was the first step in a larger plot, and that the attacks on September 11th were the second step. "Look at the logic," he says. "They wanted to do what they wanted to do on the eleventh, but provided there was no Massoud." The people who killed Massoud assumed that his death would destroy the Northern Alliance, and that if the Americans retaliated for the attacks on the World Trade Center they would have no Afghan allies on the ground. The buildup of troops on the front lines in the late summer and early fall was, then, preparation for Massoud's assassination. "They were waiting for something," an Afghan intelligence official said. And, of course, as can be seen from Mullah Omar's phone conversation, the attacks on the United States were not expected to be as catastrophic as they turned out to be. "They were expecting a reaction," the intelligence official said. "But they thought it would be a Clinton-type reaction. They didn't anticipate the kind of revenge that occurred."

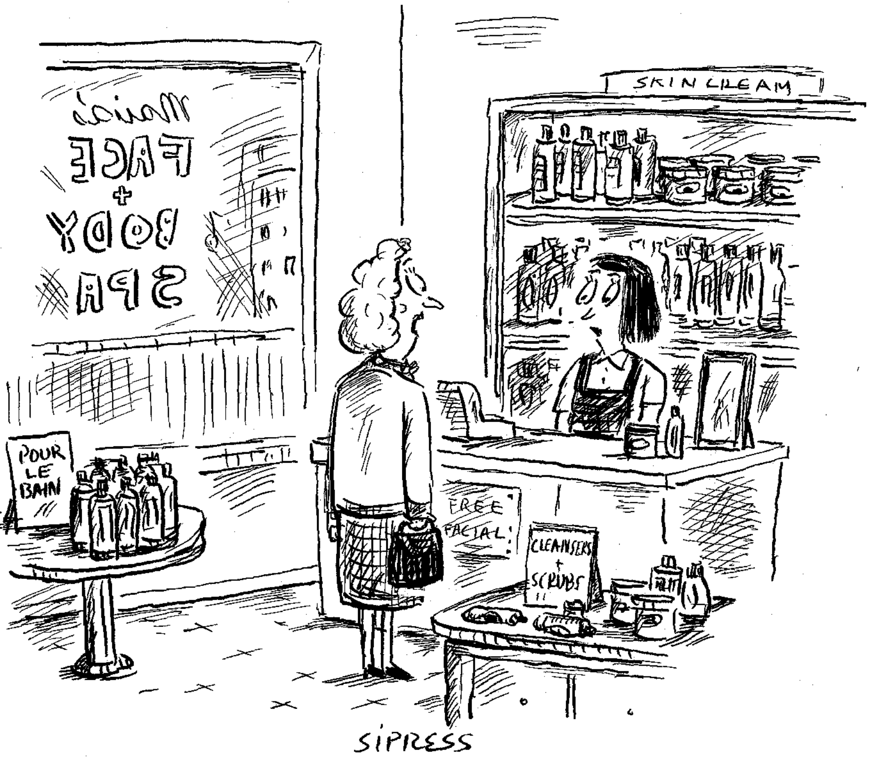
The foreign troops that were prepared to overrun a demoralized Northern Alliance were also, it appears, to have been sent further north, into Central Asia. In the ensuing chaos, an attack on Osama bin Laden and the Taliban would have been difficult. But since the official story was, at first, that Massoud had only been wounded, the Northern Alliance held its ground.

The "terrorists," which is the word that Afghans commonly use to refer to Al Qaeda, had strategic as well as tactical reasons for wanting to kill Massoud. Their most stalwart enemy had begun to gain support outside the country. In April of last year, Massoud was invited to speak to the European Parliament in Strasbourg. He gave a press conference in Paris and met with European officials there and in Brussels. "He behaved like a statesman and was received as a statesman," Wali says. "The media took an interest in him—except for the American media. I think this was a turning point. He warned the international community that Al Qaeda was dangerous, not only to Afghanistan but to the world."

Wali and other Afghans I talked to insisted that Pakistan was also involved in Massoud's murder. Massoud had never established close links with the Pakistanis, even in the seventies and eighties, when many Afghan Islamists went into exile in Pakistan. (He was legendary as a fighter in part because he stayed in Afghanistan, in the field.) The I.S.I., the Pakistani security services, supported the Taliban early on. An intelligence officer who was close to Massoud said that on the night of September 9th the President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, held a party to celebrate the assassination. He said that this information came from General Fahim, who is now minister of defense in the interim Afghan government headed by Hamid Karzai. I asked Fahim if there had been such a party, and he was evasive. "Maybe," he said. But he confirmed that Musharraf was at I.S.I. headquarters that evening, meeting with Hamid Gul, the former head of the I.S.I., who had just returned from northern Afghanistan. I asked Fahim what he felt when he met Musharraf recently in Kabul. He had shaken his hand. "Sometimes, for the sake of the greater interest," Fahim said, "one has to take a cup of poison."

Massoud's assassins were Tunisians, not Moroccans, as they had claimed. One of them had lived in Belgium, and they carried Belgian passports that had been stolen and altered, and letters of introduction with the signature of Yassir al-Sirri, the director of the Islamic Observation Centre, in London. The stamps on the passports indicated that the Arabs had arrived in Islamabad, Pakistan, on July 25th, where they were given visas by the Taliban embassy, and that they went from there to Kabul. There are two principal theories about their movements. One, which an Afghan intelligence officer called "the theory of our foreign friends"—presumably the British, the Americans, and the French—holds that the passports were forged in Europe by Al Qaeda. The assassins also carried employment identification cards from the Islamic Observation Centre, and, according to the "foreign" theory, they met with Yassir al-Sirri in London. The second theory, the "Afghan theory," is that the passports were forged in Afghanistan. Many similar passports were found when the Taliban fled. This theory holds that the two Arabs had been living in Afghanistan.

The assassins entered the Panjshir Valley under the auspices of the Northern Alliance leader Abdul Rasul Sayyaf, who says that in mid-August he was contacted by an Egyptian who had fought with him in the jihad against the Soviets. The man said that he was calling from Bosnia. He asked Sayyaf to help two Arab journalists who wanted to interview him and Massoud and President Rabbani. Engineer Muhammad Aref ("engineer" is a common Afghan honorific, indicating that someone is educated and has studied engineering), who is now the head of the Afghan intelligence services, was Massoud's chief of security; it was in his office that the assassination took place. Aref says that Sayyaf's imprimatur permitted the Arabs to bypass normal security procedures. "They came not as journalists but as guests," Aref says. "Sayyaf and Bismillah



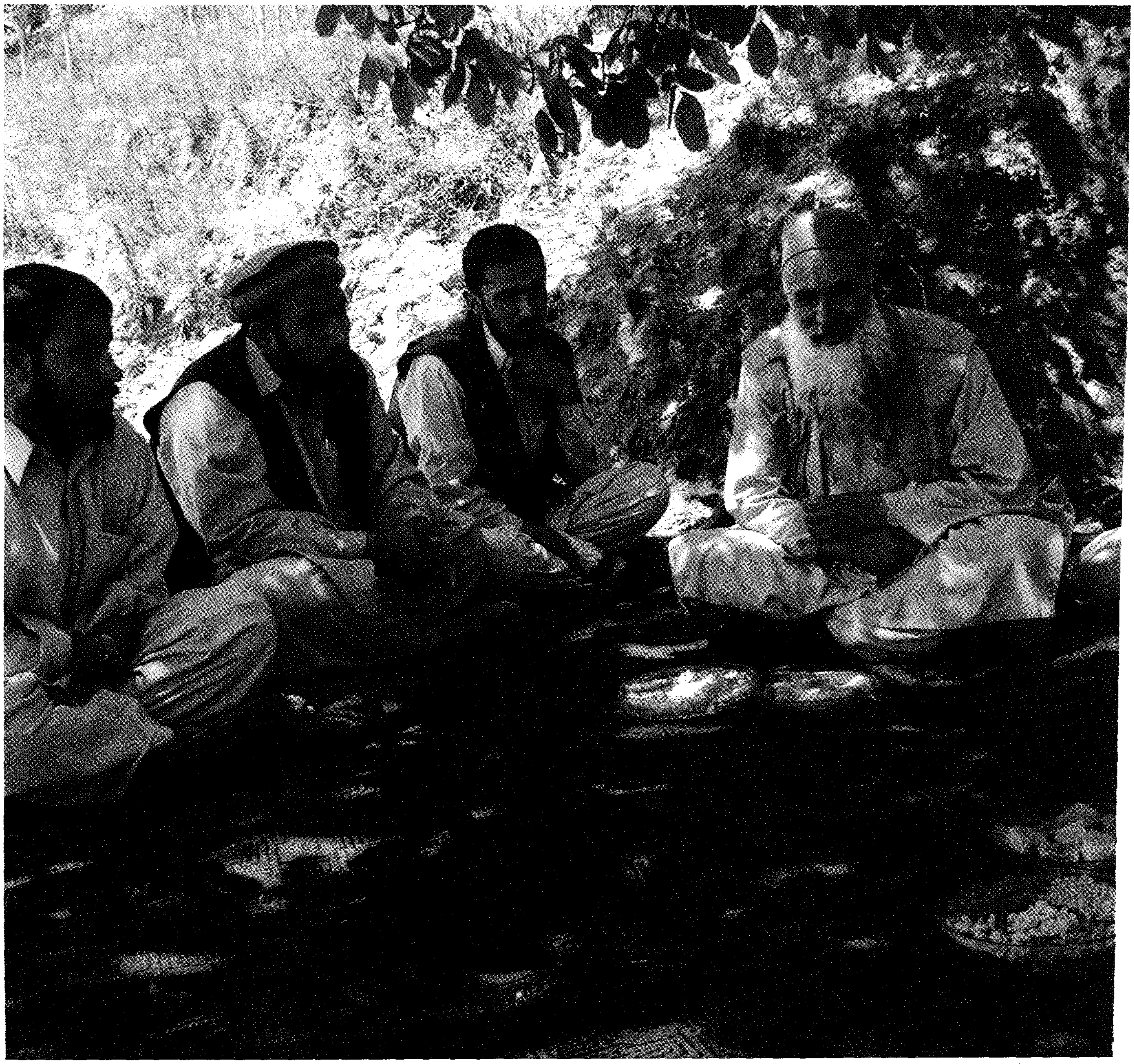
"I'm old. What's good for that?"

Khan"—the commander of the Shamali front line—"sent their men and cars to pick them up. Everybody helped them, and they met lots of people."

Maulana Atta Rahman Salim, a deputy minister in Karzai's interim government, is a respected Muslim scholar and cleric. He had an office in Khoja Bahauddin last fall and travelled to the Panjshir Valley with Massoud a week before the assassination. Rahman says that recriminations were voiced almost immediately after Massoud was killed. "Everyone began saying, 'Why weren't the terrorists searched more carefully? Why didn't people do their jobs better?' The accusations focussed on Sayyaf more than anyone else, and an Iranian newspaper published the suspicions."

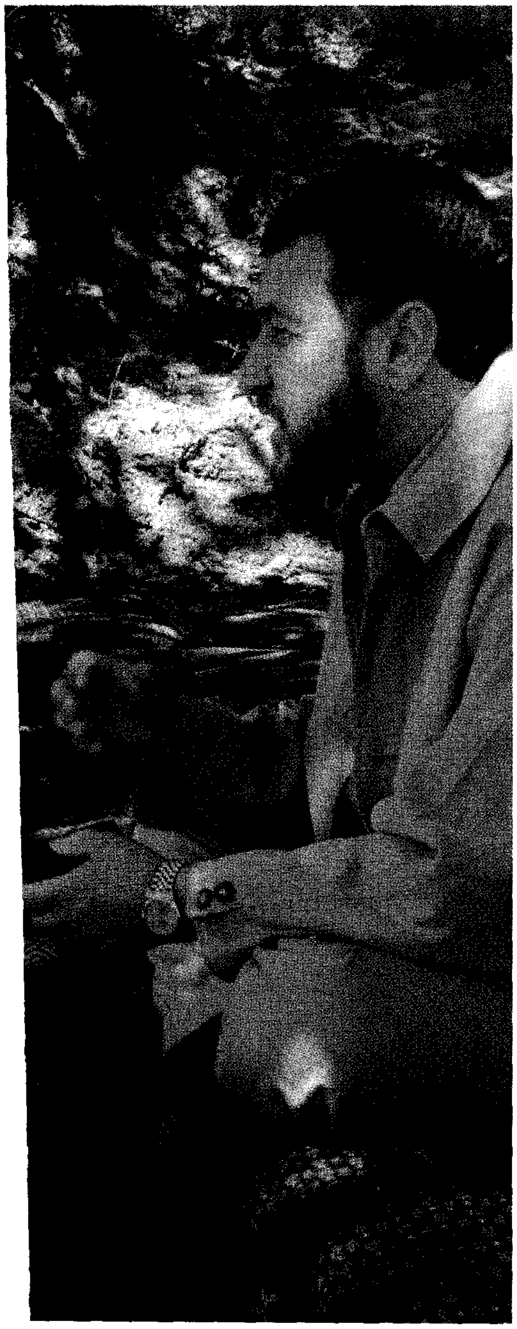
Sayyaf is an Islamic fundamentalist, a Wahhabi, who is closely associated with the global terrorists who were nurtured during the Afghan jihad in the eighties. Like Rabbani, he studied at al-Azhar University in Cairo, where he was influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood. Both he and Rabbani taught Islamic studies at Kabul University in the early seventies. They were among the founders of the Islamist movement that became the principal opposition to the Soviets. Sayyaf, who is a Pashtun, spoke Arabic fluently, and early on he became close to the Saudis. After the Communist takeover of Afghanistan in the late seventies, when the Saudis began to fund various Afghan resistance movements, Sayyaf received an inordinate share of the largesse. He formed a political party, the Ittihad-i-Islami, or Islamic Union, in 1981, and four years later founded a university in an Afghan refugee camp near Peshawar. He was allied with Massoud and Rabbani, but they differed on many things. Massoud was a more moderate Muslim than the others.

Sayyaf's university was called Dawa'a al-Jihad, which means Convert and


MAGNUM

Abdul Rasul Sayyaf (center) made it possible for Massoud's assassins to enter Northern Alliance territory. Bismillah Khan (far right) escort

Struggle, and it became known as the preëminent "school for terrorism." Ramzi Ahmed Yousef, who is serving a life sentence in a federal prison in Colorado for masterminding the bombing of the World Trade Center in 1993, attended Dawa'a al-Jihad and fought with Sayyaf's mujahideen. Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, the blind Egyptian cleric who is in the same prison, serving a life sentence for seditious conspiracy to blow up various New York City landmarks (not including the World Trade Center, although he is suspected of having been involved in the first bombing of that, too), lectured in the camps around Peshawar in the mid-eighties. Osama bin Laden supported Sayyaf financially and led a brigade of Arab fighters who used Sayyaf's base in Afghanistan. The I.S.I. provided military and intelligence expertise. When the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan in 1989 and many of the foreign jihadis moved on, a group of Ittihad members—some of them native Filipinos and some of them Arabs—formed the Abu Sayyaf terrorist organization in the Philippines.



hem around the Panjshir Valley.

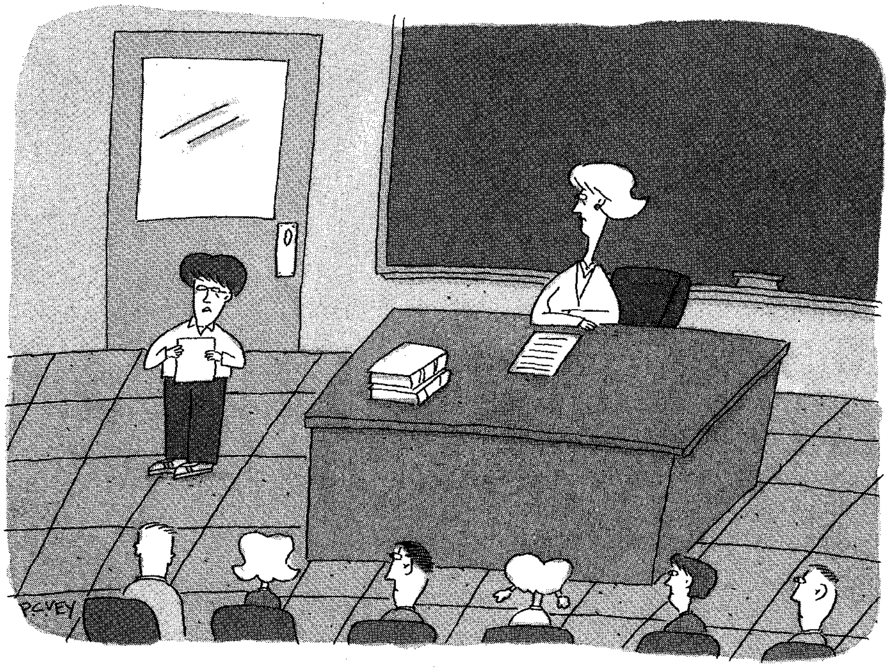
In October, Yassir al-Sirri, of the Islamic Observation Centre, was arrested in London for his role in the preparation of the letters of introduction for the two Arab assassins. (These charges were dismissed by a British court early in May, but he was immediately rearrested, in response to an extradition request by the United States.) In April, in New York, Ahmed Abdel Sattar, a U.S. Postal Service employee who lives on Staten Island, was arrested and charged with being a "surrogate" for Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman. Sattar had worked for the sheikh as a paralegal during his conspiracy trial in New York in the mid-nineties. The indictment said that Sattar was serving as a "communications facility" for the sheikh—that is, passing on his orders from jail. Sattar's phone had been tapped for some time, and among the calls scrutinized were several between him and Yassir al-Sirri in London.

Abdul Rasul Sayyaf is a big, beefy man with fair skin and a thick gray beard. He must be about six feet three and weighs probably two hundred and fifty pounds. He usually wears a white skullcap or a large turban, and a traditional Afghan *shalwar kameez*, a tunic with loose pants. Wali Massoud is slight and clean-shaven. He usually wears slacks and a sports jacket. His dark hair is parted on one side, and it often flops about boyishly. On April 28th, during a parade in Kabul to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the mujahideen's entry into the city and their victory over the Soviet-backed government there, Wali and Sayyaf were sitting together on a V.I.P. viewing stand across the street from the Eid Mosque, a long, low, pale-yellow-and-green building with a yellow dome.

The V.I.P.s looked out over a Dali-esque panorama of wholesale destruction. Southern Kabul is a desolate expanse of collapsed and gouged buildings, and most of the jihadi leaders on the viewing stand had participated in the destruction. Tens of thousands of people were slaughtered in the internecine battles that took place between April, 1992, when Ahmed Shah Massoud triumphantly entered Kabul, and September, 1996, when Massoud's forces retreated to the north and the Taliban took over. Most of the men on the viewing stand were also now maneuvering for position in the new government in Kabul, which will be chosen at the Loya Jirga, the tribal council that opens on June 10th. It is assumed that the Loya Jirga will ratify Hamid Karzai as head of state. Wali intends to run for President on the Massoudist party ticket, and he could become prime minister. That arrangement might appeal to Karzai, since it would assure him the continued support of the Three Panjshiris—Defense Minister Fahim, Foreign Minister Abdullah Abdullah, and Interior Minister Younus Qanouni—who grew up in the Panjshir Valley and were close to Massoud, and are the leading figures in the new configuration of the old Northern Alliance faction of ethnic Tajiks.

Karzai sat at the center of the front row of dignitaries, in a gray silk collarless shirt and a gray *chapan*, a finely woven Afghan robe. General Fahim was on his right, resplendent in a medal-bedecked uniform and peaked cap. General Fahim was now officially Marshal Fahim, having received a sudden promotion the night before. A number of other mujahideen commanders loyal to Fahim had also been promoted. (A few days later, I asked one of President Karzai's Afghan-American advisers if the promotions were Karzai's idea. "They forced him to do it," the man said. "He had no choice." We were talking in a parking lot, because, the adviser explained to me, the Intercontinental Hotel, where he and several other members of Karzai's government live, is bugged: "They're in the curtains.")

Patriotic music began blaring from loudspeakers, and Karzai and Fahim left the viewing stand and got into two convertible Russian military jeeps. The jeeps were driven past squads of soldiers who stood at attention in the great plaza in front of the mosque. Karzai waved at the soldiers and Fahim saluted stiffly, the tips



" 'No More School: A Dream Unfulfilled,' by Howard Willocoski."

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of his fingers almost touching the beak of his outsized marshal's hat. Meanwhile, a master of ceremonies and a poet took turns at the microphone. "Whoever attacks Afghanistan will weep, just as Britain and Russia did," the master of ceremonies said. Karzai and Fahim returned to the viewing stand, and Fahim made a speech about how the mujahideen had vanquished the Soviets and the Taliban. He didn't mention the American bombing campaign. A float moved slowly down the avenue, bearing a huge portrait of Massoud in white safari clothes, his arms thoughtfully folded. Karzai announced that Massoud was henceforth Afghanistan's official National Hero.

Scores of Russian tanks and armored personnel carriers rumbled past bearing framed portraits of Massoud and Karzai. They were followed by disabled jihadi veterans in blue-gray tunics, on crutches and in wheelchairs. Behind the veterans came one marching platoon after another of mujahideen, organized according to their home provinces, with Massoud's Panjshiris in the lead. A parachutist floated down from a helicopter, intending to land in front of the mosque, but he missed his target and drifted off into the ruins in the distance. Fifteen minutes later, he showed up on the back of a motorbike, his parachute billowing behind him. A second parachutist, a woman this time, headed for the plaza, and she, too, disappeared into the ruins but soon reappeared, marching by to applause, and carrying a carpet decorated with Massoud's image.

As the parade ended, I made my way past the front of the viewing stand, close enough to see Sayyaf lean over and say something to Wali Massoud. Wali sat bolt upright in his chair. He nodded his head and smiled unconvincingly.

At the meeting of Afghan delegations in Bonn late last year, at which Karzai's interim government was set up, two of Sayyaf's deputies were given minor ministerial positions. Apparently, Sayyaf was reasonably happy with this arrangement, and he agreed to withdraw his gunmen from Kabul and to establish a command base in his home town of Paghman, an hour's drive into the mountains northwest of the city. His militia controls all the territory between Paghman and the suburbs of Kabul, ending just a few hundred metres from the Intercontinental Hotel.

In March, the I.S.A.F., the international security force in Afghanistan, accused Sayyaf's militiamen of carrying out several robberies and killings in the western suburbs, where many of the city's minority ethnic Shia Muslims, the Hazaras, live. Sayyaf denied the accusations. As with most such incidents in Afghanistan, the investigation of this one appears to have fizzled away inconclusively. There is a lot of bad history between Sayyaf and the Hazaras. In the mid-nineties, Sayyaf's troops massacred thousands of Hazara civilians in Kabul. According to Human Rights Watch, his militia became renowned for a particularly gruesome method of dispatching its enemies—herding them into metal shipping containers and then setting fires beneath them, to roast them alive.

I had met Sayyaf for the first time a little more than a week before the parade, in his headquarters in Paghman. We sat on a red carpet under a walnut tree on a grassy, terraced hillside. He had a couple of friends with him, and a dozen or so armed bodyguards stood a short distance away. We talked for a while, and I told Sayyaf that I had been in Jalalabad in 1989, when the mujahideen—among them hundreds of Arab Wahhabi fighters recruited by Sayyaf—had laid siege to the city. He asked me why I had not come to his camp, which was off the road leading to Jalalabad from the Pakistani border, in the Khyber Pass. I didn't remind him that in those days his virulently anti-Western views had made him off limits to most foreign journalists, many of whom had been terrorized by his Wahhabi friends. I just said that I had not had very good contacts. He nodded.

When I got up to leave, I saw a group of men walking toward me. One of them, who was surrounded by gunmen, was then-General Fahim's brother. We nodded to one another.

The day after the parade, I met Sayyaf at his house in the northwestern suburbs of Kabul, in a neighborhood that had been devastated in the fighting between his men and the Hazaras in the mid-nineties. Sayyaf was in a meeting in an upstairs room, and as it broke up I saw that one of the men with him was a mujahideen commander whose forces had helped take Kunduz from the Taliban in November. Sayyaf introduced him to me as the new governor of Kabul province. When the other men left, we sat in the living room and he talked about himself. His father died when he was six, and he attended a madrasah in Paghman, and then the University of Kabul, where

Burhanuddin Rabbani had been his teacher. Sayyaf was lecturing in Islamic studies when Daud overthrew the King, and the Communists began to take over the government. He was in prison for nearly six years because of his Islamist activities, and then in exile in Pakistan. He claimed that he had spent most of the war years in Afghanistan, which gave him more legitimacy as a leader than some others had. And he said that he had been unjustly accused of being abusive: "Islam taught me to be kind to people."

After I met with Sayyaf a few times, he became unavailable. He was too ill to see me, or too busy, or I should call back tomorrow. And then the phone was switched off. So one hot Sunday morning in the middle of May I drove up to Paghman with one of Sayyaf's Ittihad fighters, a number of whom are bivouacked at a villa he owns in Wazir Akbar Khan, a relatively pleasant residential neighborhood in Kabul. It would have been difficult to get anywhere near Sayyaf without one of his men as an escort. The road between Paghman and Kabul is considered unsafe by late afternoon; several armed robberies and murders have occurred along it in recent months.

We stopped at a junction in the track where there was a sentry hut and a dozen or so fighters. I gave one of them my business card with a note scribbled on the back of it, addressed to Sayyaf, and the man took it and walked off toward an orchard a hundred metres or so in front of us. He came back in a few minutes and motioned us to drive on. Sayyaf was seated with several other men under the walnut tree where we had had our first conversation. One of the men was General Bismillah Khan, the Northern Alliance commander who had escorted the Arab assassins on excursions to the front lines when they were in the Panjshir Valley in August, posing as journalists. Bismillah Khan is now in charge of Kabul's military defenses.

I apologized for my intrusion, and said it was good that both Sayyaf and Bismillah Khan were there, since I wished to talk to them both. "As I am sure you know," I said to Sayyaf, "there are those who have expressed doubts about your relationship with Massoud's assassins, because they first came into the Northern Alliance territory through you." Sayyaf's eyes narrowed, and he stared hard at me. He translated what I had said to Bismillah Khan, who speaks no English, and then he turned and said to me, in English that seemed much more halting than during our previous meetings, that they had let the Arabs in so that they could see that they were good Muslims, and that their forces had not been tainted by Westerners.

Bismillah Khan began speaking in Persian, and Sayyaf translated. Khan said that in retrospect the two Arabs behaved suspiciously, but he had not noticed this at the time. "Now, when I think about them, I remember that they had had beards but had recently shaved them off. The marks of the beards were still there." He moved his hands along his jawline to show what he meant. Sayyaf chuckled and said that the Arabs had been very nervous whenever they were in a car. "If they went with our people to the bunkers"—at the Shamali front line—"they would say, 'Please go slowly, because of our cameras; we don't want them to be damaged.' Before the car moved, they always put the cameras on their knees and told the driver to be careful."

I asked Sayyaf how the two Arabs had come to be with him in the first place. He described the phone call from the former jihadi—"an Arab from Egypt, Abu Hani"—who said he was in Bosnia and wanted Sayyaf to help the putative journalists get an interview with Massoud. Sayyaf also described a meeting of most of the Northern Alliance leadership that took place in the Panjshir Valley while the Arabs were there. He said that the Arabs had tried to come into the meeting room but had been stopped by guards. "They wanted to carry out their plan there," he said. "They wanted to eliminate all the leaders of the resistance." Bismillah Khan said something in Persian, and Sayyaf translated it as a comment about Sayyaf telling Massoud and Bismillah Khan that he had doubts about the Arabs and warning Massoud not to see them. Sayyaf threw up his hands to indicate that he had done all he could.

My final meeting with Sayyaf took place three days later, in another of his houses, off the road leading from Kabul to Paghman. He wasn't there when I arrived, but he soon drove up, in a convoy of Land Cruisers full of armed men. We sat in the living room with several aides and a general from Paktia province who was visiting. I asked Sayyaf to describe his vision of the future of Afghanistan, and he spoke about the importance of an Islamic state, and about closely following the teachings of the Koran and not trying to introduce new ideas—the fundamentalist line. Then he brought up the betrayal of Afghanistan by the West in the early nineties, after the Soviets had retreated. "Once the Afghans kicked out the Red Army, the Western countries cut their backing," he said. "They had been supporting us only for their own interests."

I asked him about Osama bin Laden and the other Arabs whom he had known well and who had fought alongside him against the Russians. Osama had regarded Sayyaf as a father figure, had he not? Sayyaf smiled, and took off his turban and placed it on the sofa next to him. His hands were trembling. "I want to tell you frankly about those who became extremists," he said. "No one can name one example of harm done by those men when they were with us in the jihad. We were not extremists, and neither were they. But later, when Osama and his friends were brought to help the Taliban, who *were* extremists, they began to harm the world. I want to ask you, who brought Osama?"

Sayyaf was agitated. He sat on the edge of the sofa and leaned forward. He was expressing a conspiracy theory that is not uncommon in Kabul, even among reasonably sophisticated Afghans who have visited the West: that the Americans, with the aid of Pakistan, supported the Taliban and Osama bin Laden so that they could justify an invasion and take over the country. "The extremists backed by the foreigners were able to attack us," Sayyaf said. "We were the victims." His aides and the general from Paktia nodded in agreement. "I know that Osama and the Taliban did the assassination," Sayyaf said. "But who was behind them? All of those who were trying to help the Taliban were behind the assassination."

Yahya Massoud, the eldest of Ahmed Shah Massoud's brothers—he is fifty-two—took me on an overnight trip to the family's home town of Bazarak, in the Panjshir Valley, three hours northeast of Kabul. We travelled north across the Shamali plain, a once fertile valley of vineyards and orchards which stretches from Kabul all the way to the mountains where the Panjshir begins. The Taliban methodically destroyed the Shamali after they seized power in Kabul, in order to create a no man's land between the capital and Massoud's front line, which was near the northern end of the valley. The landscape is a green Arcadia beyond that point. The Taliban had made incursions into it but had never held the territory long enough to destroy it.

At the little market town of Charikar, we stopped to have lunch with General Bismillah Khan. Carpets were laid out under the trees around a pond. A birdcage with a white parakeet in it hung from one of the trees. Tea and bowls of *kishmish*—almonds and raisins and sweets—were served, and then we all filed into a long, L-shaped room, where we were shown to our places on cushions set around the walls. The entire floor was covered with tablecloths upon which a feast of Afghan dishes was arrayed: bowls of salad, rice pilaf with raisins and almonds, mutton, yogurt, soup, fruit, chicken and lamb, and basins full of tiny broiled quail, cooked whole. There must have been five hundred of them. The blackened cadavers rested in piles of scorched wings and feet and skulls and beaks and sunken eye sockets. Taking my cue from the men around me, I popped one in my mouth and began crunching. I found that after four or five vigorous jaw movements I was able to swallow the thing and be done with the experience.

After the feast, Bismillah Khan and his entourage returned to Kabul, and Yahya Massoud and I journeyed on into the Panjshir, which is really more of a canyon than a valley. At the mouth of the canyon, we drove through the small town of Gulbahar, where the two Arab terrorists had stayed, in one of Sayyaf's guest-houses.

In a couple of hours, we reached the promontory above Bazarak where Massoud is buried. An indented area in the hill was surrounded by a brick wall covered with a plastic-and-tin roof held up by stripped saplings. Inside, the tomb, which is a long dirt mound, was covered with a gold-brocaded burgundy cloth and surrounded by flowers in pots. We stopped there for a while, and Yahya told me of the family's plans to turn the burial place into a proper mausoleum complex and pilgrimage site.

A few hundred metres outside of Bazarak, the road drops down the mountainside toward the river. The Massoud family compound, a hamlet-sized collection of flat-roofed adobe buildings, is on a steep slope overlooking the water. We drove up to a sentry hut and past a modern, white-painted cement house that Yahya said belonged to one of his sisters, who lives in Holland. A young soldier at the hut saluted and lowered the rope barrier, and we continued up the muddy track and parked alongside Massoud's grandfather's house. A smaller whitewashed building that was attached to it had belonged to his father, an Afghan military officer who was killed in a car crash in 1993. Ahmed Shah Massoud was born there and had lived in the house for a time during the jihad, Yahya said. He used part of it as his headquarters.

A big rock wall topped with tin had been built into the steep hillside above their father's house. The wall formed a shining semicircle against the dark scree of the barren hill, enclosing a swath of terraced gardens that led to a modern, white house. Six or seven torrents of water arced gracefully down the hill from the house, bouncing from one terrace to another, and a stone pathway led up through a series of orange-colored latticed arbors. "This was the house Massoud was building for his family," said Yahya. "It was almost finished when he died." His wife and six children live in Iran now.

The house was a simple two-story structure made of concrete, but it had lots of windows and a glorious southern exposure. You could see a mulberry park below, and the curving river and the mountains beyond, and, in the distance, great craggy snowcapped peaks. We walked along a pathway that led past an orchard and went into Massoud's father's house. It had recently been modernized, and the concrete interior walls were painted a pale peach color. A single portrait hung on the wall. It was a pencil drawing of Massoud, smiling. That night, we slept on velveteen sleeping pads in the room where Massoud was born.

I met Bismillah Khan again in late May, at his base in Kabul. He shared it with a Swedish contingent of the I.S.A.F. He has an office on the rooftop of a building that has a rose garden and a lawn and a huge, sixties-style swimming pool. The Swedes were giving a Taste of Sweden barbecue when I arrived, and Bismillah Khan and his men were lined up with paper plates and plastic utensils to get their food. They were obviously ill at ease, and not a little offended, since at an Afghan feast a guest sits and is served.

Some of the Afghans didn't know how to eat with forks and knives, and those who did helped them. They whispered about what was on their plates: barbecued beef, chicken, potatoes, and bamboo shoots. They didn't know what bamboo was, and most of them didn't touch it. They had never eaten potatoes with the skins on. A few of the men cracked jokes in Dari about the meat, which they thought might be dog, or pork. Others said that it wasn't *halal*, that is, that a butcher had not uttered "God is great" when the animal's throat was cut.

At the end of the meal, the Swedish chef, a burly soldier, announced that he wanted to wish one of the other soldiers happy birthday, and, as was the custom in Sweden, he would present him with a gift. This was all translated to the Afghans, who were puzzled, since they don't celebrate birthdays. The chef unwrapped a bottle of whiskey and handed it to the soldier. "And now," the chef said, "our friend must share his gift, as is the custom in Afghanistan, with everyone here. It will take, I estimate, five minutes." And he laughed at his joke.

Two of Bismillah Khan's aides ran over to the Swede's translator and pointed out that this was a big mistake. Fridoun, my translator, muttered, "Don't they learn anything at all about Afghan culture before they come?" The whiskey bottle was removed, and Bismillah Khan, who had politely eaten everything on his plate during dinner, rose and thanked his hosts and shook the officers' hands.

Later, in Bismillah Khan's office, I asked him about one of the key elements in Sayyaf's explanation of his role in the matter of Massoud's assassination. Sayyaf had told me, and others, that he had warned Bismillah Khan and Massoud that the Arabs might be dangerous and that he didn't trust them. Bismillah Khan said only that Sayyaf had told Massoud that the Arabs seemed "strange." He became testy when pressed and said that I should talk to Sayyaf. He also said that he hadn't sent a car to pick up the Arabs. They had been picked up by Sayyaf's men. "Who brought them from the front line to Kabul?" I asked. "I don't know," Bismillah Khan said. "Maybe the Taliban."

The Arab assassins had been taken to Sayyaf's house and given tea, and were introduced to a man named Qazi Karamatullah Siddiq, who spoke Arabic and was assigned to accompany them while they were in the Panjshir. Siddiq is a Muslim scholar and a graduate in Sharia law from Dawa'a al-Jihad, Sayyaf's university near Peshawar. He now works in one of the ministries in the interim government, and I talked with him about the Arabs. Although Siddiq is a Sayyaf loyalist, he contradicted several of Sayyaf's recollections, most notably the one about the assassins almost getting into a meeting of Northern Alliance leaders in the Panjshir, supposedly to kill them all. This was a story that I had heard repeatedly as evidence that Sayyaf was not involved in the plot to kill Massoud, since he would have been killed himself. But Siddiq says that the Arabs never got near the meeting, because Sayyaf had refused, in advance, to give them permission. He says that Sayyaf then arranged for the Arabs to interview Massoud in Khoja Bahauddin. Siddiq also said that Sayyaf never mentioned any suspicions about the Arabs until after the assassination.

Conspiracy theories are given credence in Afghanistan not least because there have been, historically, a lot of conspiracies. The reigning political ethos is survival of the fittest, and alliances are fluid. Afghans are geographically isolated, xenophobic, and cynical from years of war. Sayyaf helped the assassins, and most of the people I spoke to who were close to Massoud—relatives, intelligence agents, military commanders—believe that he must have had some sense, if not explicit knowledge, of the assassins' plans. But he was only one—perhaps the final—link in a chain of people who made it possible for the two Arabs to get to Khoja Bahauddin with their sophisticated explosives and well-choreographed suicide plan. For instance, among the CDs and notebooks and verses from the Koran found in the Arabs' things after the assassination was a letter of recommendation written by the head of the Afghan Red Crescent Society (shocking documentation of the culture of complicity and appeasement that had developed between N.G.O.s and the Taliban). The stolen Belgian passports and letters of introduction from Yassir al-Sirri in London are part of a web of circumstantial evidence tying Massoud's assassins to Al Qaeda and, by inference, to the World Trade Center bombing. "These links are so strong," an Afghan intelligence agent close to the investigation of Massoud's death said to me, "that they leave no doubt to anyone in intelligence, with knowledge of terrorist organizations, and of Afghanistan, that the two events were connected."

One afternoon toward the end of May, I went to lunch at Wali Massoud's house. He had several guests, including a group of Afghan-American businessmen. One of them, who lives in Virginia and works for DynCorp, an American defense contractor, told me that he had been away for twenty-five years but was thinking of returning if he could do some business for his company.

Wali and I were able to talk for a few minutes in a corner, and I said to him that an Afghan intelligence officer had told me that, although several European intelligence agencies are investigating his brother's murder, there isn't much of an investigation taking place in Afghanistan.

"That's right," he said. "There is no investigation here at all."

I asked Wali if the intense preparations for the upcoming Loya Jirga were distracting people. I had been struck by the fact that Sayyaf seemed to be very involved in the dealmaking that was going on. Why would so many of those who revered Massoud be prepared to cut deals with a man who is suspected of betraying him?

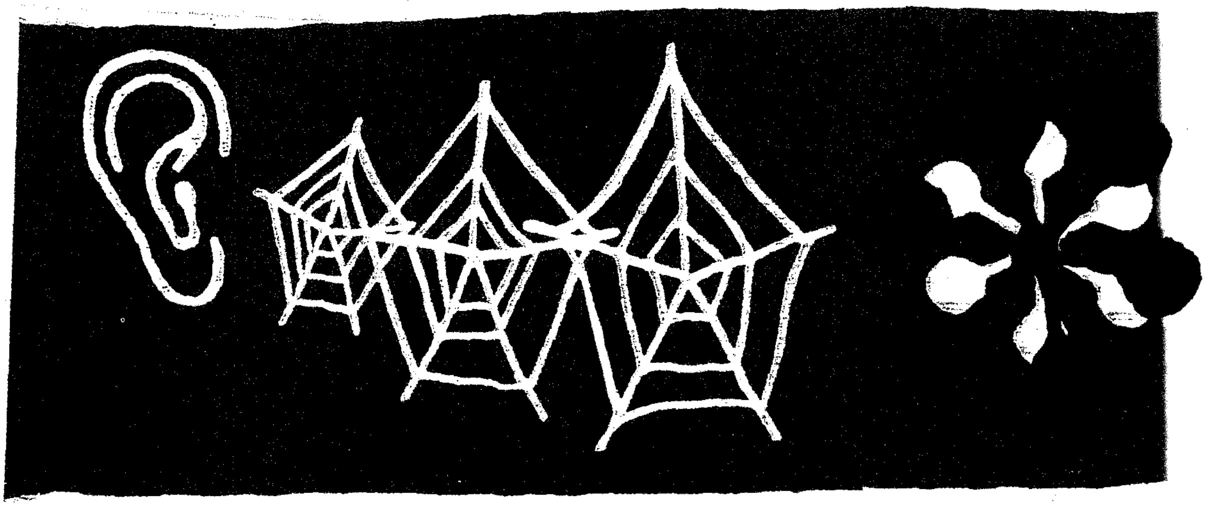
"All of these people," Wali said, "are involved in politics." ♦

"I married for love. I divorced for money."

FICTION

A PRIMER FOR THE PUNCTUATION OF HEART DISEASE

BY JONATHAN SAFRAN FOER



FILIP PAGOWSKI

□ The "silence mark" signifies an absence of language, and there is at least one on every page of the story of my family life. Most often used in the conversations I have with my grandmother about her life in Europe during the war, and in conversations with my father about our family's history of heart disease—we have forty-one heart attacks between us, and counting—the silence mark is a staple of familial punctuation. Note the use of silence in the following brief exchange, when my father called me at college, the morning of his most recent angioplasty:

"Listen," he said, and then surrendered to a long pause, as if the pause were what I was supposed to listen to. "I'm sure everything's gonna be fine, but I just wanted to let you know—"

"I already know," I said.

"□"

"□"

"□"

"□"

"O.K.," he said.

"I'll talk to you tonight," I said, and I could hear, in the receiver, my own heartbeat.

He said, "Yup."

■ The "willed silence mark" signifies an intentional silence, the conversational equivalent of building a wall over which you can't climb, through which you can't see, against which you break the bones of your hands and wrists. I often inflict willed silences upon my mother when she asks about my relationships with girls. Perhaps this is because I never have *relationships* with girls—only *relations*. It depresses me to think that I've never had sex with anyone who really loved me. Sometimes I wonder if having sex with a girl who doesn't love me is like felling a tree, alone, in a forest: no one hears about it; it didn't happen.

?? The "insistent question mark" denotes one family member's refusal to yield to a willed silence, as in this conversation with my mother:

"Are you dating at all?"

"□"

"But you're seeing people, I'm sure. Right?"

"□"

"I don't get it. Are you ashamed of the girl? Are you ashamed of me?"

"■"

"??"

¡ As it visually suggests, the "unxclamation point" is the opposite of an exclamation point; it indicates a whisper.

The best example of this usage occurred when I was a boy. My grandmother was driving me to a piano lesson, and the Volvo's wipers only moved the rain around. She turned down the volume of the second side of the seventh tape of an audio version of "Shoah," put her hand on my cheek, and said, "I hope that you never love anyone as much as I love you¡"

Why was she whispering? We were the only ones who could hear.

¡¡ Theoretically, the "extraunxclamation points" would be used to denote twice an unxclamation point, but in practice any whisper that quiet would not be heard. I take comfort in believing that at least some of the silences in my life were really extraunxclamations.

!! The "extraexclamation points" are simply twice an exclamation point. I've never had a heated argument with any member of my family. We've never yelled at each other, or disagreed with any passion. In fact, I can't even remember a difference of opinion. There are those who would say that this is unhealthy. But, since it is the case, there exists only one instance of extraexclamation points in our family history, and they were uttered by a stranger who was vying with my father for a parking space in front of the National Zoo.

"Give it up, fucker!!" he hollered at my father, in front of my mother, my brothers, and me.

"Well, I'm sorry," my father said, pushing the bridge of his glasses up his nose, "but I think it's rather obvious that we arrived at this space first. You see, we were approaching from—"

"Give . . . it . . . up . . . fucker!!"

"Well, it's just that I think I'm in the right on this particu—"

"GIVE IT UP, FUCKER!!"

"Give it up, Dad!" I said, suffering a minor coronary event as my fingers clenched his seat's headrest.

"Je-sus!" the man yelled, pounding his fist against the outside of his car door. "Giveitupfucker!!"

Ultimately, my father gave it up, and we found a spot several blocks away. Before we got out, he pushed in the cigarette lighter, and we waited, in silence, as it got hot. When it popped out, he pushed it back in. "It's never, ever worth it," he said, turning back to us, his hand against his heart.

~ Placed at the end of a sentence, the "pedal point" signifies a thought that dissolves into a suggestive silence. The pedal point is distinguished from the ellipsis and the dash in that the thought it follows is neither incomplete nor interrupted but an outstretched hand. My younger brother uses these a lot with me, probably because he, of all the members of my family, is the one most capable of telling me what he needs to tell me without having to say it. Or, rather, he's the one whose words I'm most convinced I don't need to hear. Very often he will say, "Jonathan~" and I will say, "I know."

A few weeks ago, he was having problems with his heart. A visit to his university's health center to check out some chest pains became a trip to the emergency room became a week in the intensive-care unit. As it turns out, he's been having one long heart attack for the last six years. "It's nowhere near as bad as it sounds," the doctor told my parents, "but it's definitely something we want to take care of."

I called my brother that night and told him that he shouldn't worry. He said, "I know. But that doesn't mean there's nothing to worry about~"

"I know~" I said.

"I know~" he said.

"I~"

"I~"

"□"

Does my little brother have relationships with girls? I don't know.

↓ Another commonly employed familial punctuation mark, the "low point," is used either in place—or for accentuation at the end—of such phrases as "This is terrible," "This is irremediable," "It couldn't possibly be worse."

> "It's good to have somebody, Jonathan. It's necessary."
> "□"
> "It pains me to think of you alone."
> "■↓"
> "??↓"

Interestingly, low points always come in pairs in my family. That is, the acknowledgment of whatever is terrible and irremediable becomes itself something terrible and irremediable—and often worse than the original referent. For example, my sadness makes my mother sadder than the cause of my sadness does. Of course, her sadness then makes me sad. Thus is created a "low-point chain": ↓↓↓↓↓ . . . ∞.

❄ The "snowflake" is used at the end of a unique familial phrase—that is, any sequence of words that has never, in the history of our family life, been assembled as such. For example, "I didn't die in the Holocaust, but all of my siblings did, so where does that leave me?❄" Or, "My heart is no good, and I'm afraid of dying, and I'm also afraid of saying I love you.❄"

☺ The "corroboration mark" is more or less what it looks like. But it would be a mistake to think that it simply stands in place of "I agree," or even "Yes." Witness the subtle usage in this dialogue between my mother and my father:

> "Could you add orange juice to the grocery list, but remember to get the kind with reduced acid. Also some cottage cheese. And that bacon-substitute stuff. And a few Yahrzeit candles."
> "☺"
> "The car needs gas. I need tampons."
> "☺"
> "Is Jonathan dating anyone? I'm not prying, but I'm very interested."
> "☺"

My father has suffered twenty-two heart attacks—more than the rest of us combined. Once, in a moment of frankness after his nineteenth, he told me that his marriage to my mother had been successful because he had become a yes-man early on.

"We've only had one fight," he said. "It was in our first week of marriage. I realized that it's never, ever worth it."

My father and I were pulling weeds one afternoon a few weeks ago. He was disobeying his cardiologist's order not to pull weeds. The problem, the doctor says, is not the physical exertion but the emotional stress that weeding inflicts on my father. He has dreams of weeds sprouting from his body, of having to pull them, at the roots, from his chest. He has also been told not to watch Orioles games and not to think about the current Administration.

As we weeded, my father made a joke about how my older brother, who, barring a fatal heart attack, was to get married in a few weeks, had already become a yes-man. Hearing this felt like having an elephant sit on my chest—my brother, whom I loved more than I loved myself, was surrendering.

"Your grandfather was a yes-man," my father added, on his knees, his fingers pushing into the earth, "and your children will be yes-men."

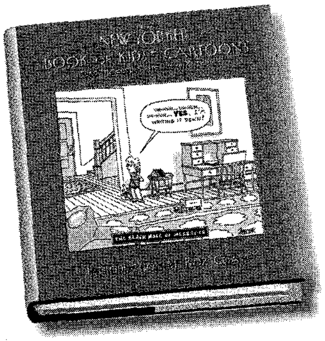
I've been thinking about that conversation ever since, and I've come to understand—with a straining heart—that I, too, am becoming a yes-man, and that, like my father's and my brother's, my surrender has little to do with the people I say yes to, or with the existence of questions at all. It has to do with a fear of dying, with rehearsal and preparation.

✂🕸 The "severed web" is a Barely Tolerable Substitute, whose meaning approximates "I love you," and which can be used in place of "I love you." Other Barely Tolerable Substitutes include, but are not limited to:

→|←, which approximates "I love you."
👂□, which approximates "I love you."
🔒, which approximates "I love you."
✕✈, which approximates "I love you."

I don't know how many Barely Tolerable Substitutes there are, but often it feels as if they were everywhere, as if everything that is spoken and done—every

Rediscover...



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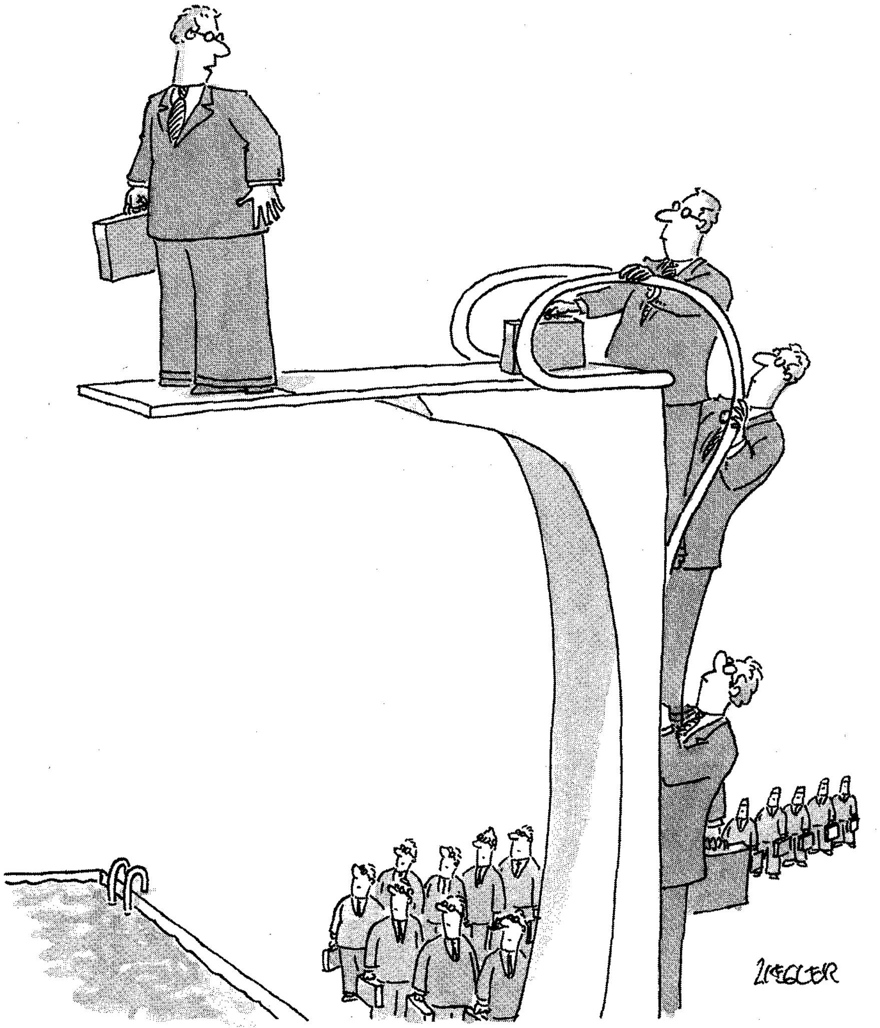

"The bottom line here, gentlemen, is that, no matter what we do, we're going to end up getting wet."

• •

"Yup," "O.K.," and "I already know," every weed pulled from the lawn, every sexual act—were just Barely Tolerable.

:: Unlike the colon, which is used to mark a major division in a sentence, and to indicate that what follows is an elaboration, summation, implication, etc., of what precedes, the "reversible colon" is used when what appears on either side elaborates, summates, implicates, etc., what's on the other side. In other words, the two halves of the sentence explain each other, as in the cases of "Mother::Me," and "Father::Death." Here are some examples of reversible sentences:

My eyes water when I speak about my family::I don't like to speak about my family.

I've never felt loved by anyone outside of my family::my persistent depression.

1938 to 1945::☐.

Sex::yes.

My grandmother's sadness::my mother's sadness::my sadness::the sadness that will come after me.

To be Jewish::to be Jewish.

Heart disease::yes.

← Familial communication always has to do with failures to communicate. It is common that in the course of a conversation one of the participants will not hear something that the other has said. It is also quite common that one of the participants will not understand what the other has said. Somewhat less common is one participant's saying something whose words the other understands completely but whose meaning is not understood at all. This can happen

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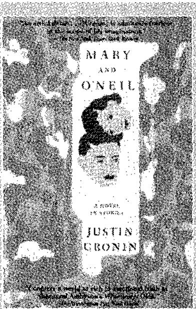

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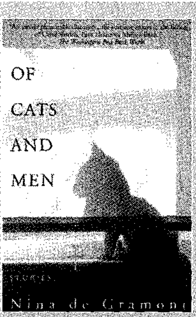

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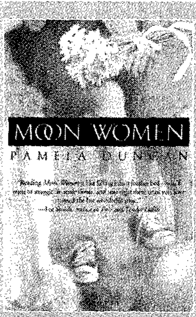

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with very simple sentences, like "I hope that you never love anyone as much as I love you¡"

But, in our best, least depressing moments, we *try* to understand what we have failed to understand. A "backup" is used: we start again at the beginning, we replay what was missed and make an effort to hear what was meant instead of what was said:

"It pains me to think of you alone."
"←It pains me to think of me without any grandchildren to love."

{} A related set of marks, the "should-have brackets," signify words that were not spoken but should have been, as in this dialogue with my father:

"Are you hearing static?"
"{I'm crying into the phone.}"
"Jonathan?"
"□"
"Jonathan~"
"■"
"⸮⸮"
"I::not myself~"
"{A child's sadness is a parent's sadness.}"
"{A parent's sadness is a child's sadness.}"
"←"
"I'm probably just tired¡"
"{I never told you this, because I thought it might hurt you, but in my dreams it was *you*. Not me. *You* were pulling the weeds from my chest.}"
"{I want to love and be loved.}"
"☺"
"☺"
"↓"
"↓"
"🔒"
"☺"
"□↔□↔□"
"↓"
"↓"
"⏭○⏮"
"▨ + ▨ → ■"
"☺"
"👂□"
"⌧⌫"
"◎◘❖⭘◆○○□◆⊙●"
"■"
"{I love you.}"
"{I love you, too. So much.}"

Of course, my sense of the should-have is unlikely to be the same as my brothers', or my mother's, or my father's. Sometimes—when I'm in the car, or having sex, or talking to one of them on the phone—I imagine their should-have versions. I sew them together into a new life, leaving out everything that actually happened and was said. ♦

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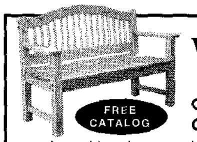

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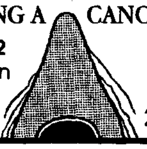

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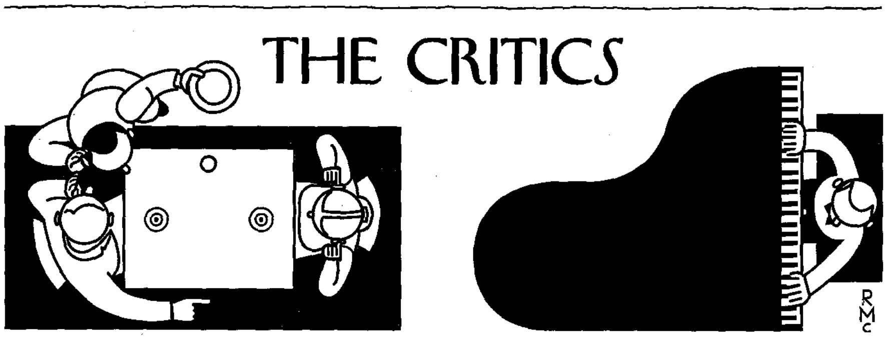


BOOKS

DOING IT IN THE ROAD

A Frenchwoman reveals a life of sexual excess.

BY JUDITH THURMAN

I spent part of every summer until I was ten with my grandmother, who lived in a working-class suburb of Boston. The neighbors were devoutly Catholic, and they occasionally took me to Mass at their parish church up the hill. On sultry August afternoons in that era before vernacular prayers and air-conditioning, my friends and I used the sanctuary as a place to cool off and to play the confession game. One girl would tell her sins and the others would invent her chastisement. We were fond of the word "flagellation." Peggy, who was pale and fat, entertained the fantasy of scourging herself for a mystic bridegroom. I considered converting, so as to be eligible for sainthood. In the late nineteen-fifties, there were still not many avenues of glory open to ambitious virgins who couldn't tap-dance. Heroic self-abnegation was, as it has been for two millennia, one of the few.

Marie scornfully rejected any thought of taking the veil. She had already tried smoking and had no intention of practicing any romantic austerities. It was she who first pointed out that there was a cavity between our thighs, and that boys would want to put their "thing" there, and that if we let them "it would hurt like hell the first time, but you do it for love." I must have read about St. Catherine of Siena (1347-80) for the first time that summer, because her hagiography left an indelible impression that I associate with the secrets Marie thrust upon us in the purple-tinted gloom of Our Lady's. As a young novice of the Sisters of Penance, Catherine had nursed a woman with breast cancer. The lesions were suppurating and gave off a nauseating smell. Because she aspired to dominate her physical sensations—attractions and repulsions—in the name of submission to a higher power, the future Doctor of the Church drained some of the fluid into a ladle and drank it. That night, Jesus came to her in a vision and invited her to drink the blood spurting from His wounds. A few years later, she wrote, "I, Catherine . . . turn to and lean upon the tree of the most holy cross of Christ crucified and there I wish to be nailed; and do not doubt that I will be pierced through and nailed with him for love and with deep humility."

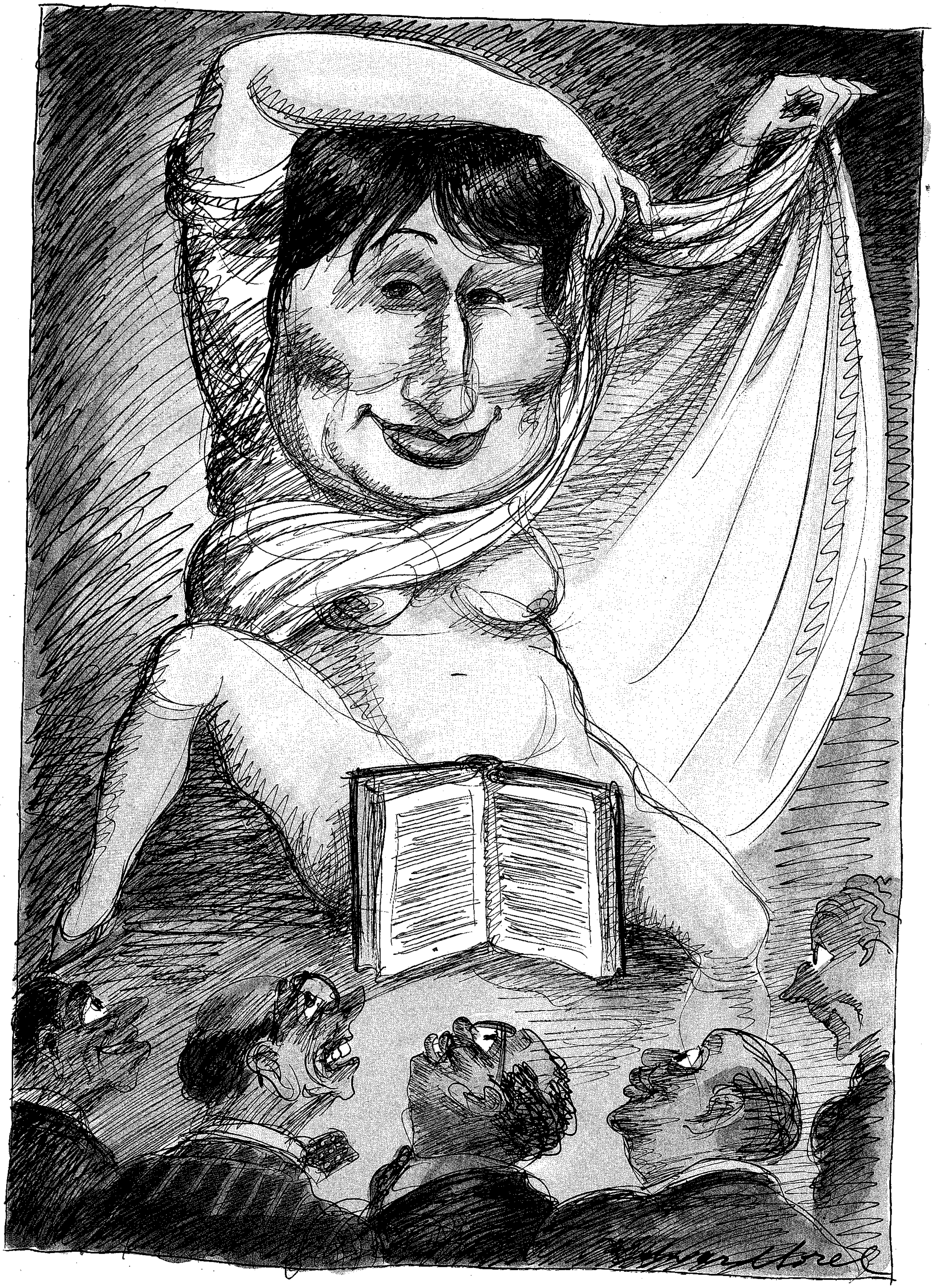
In a working-class suburb of Paris, another Catherine, surnamed Millet—a devoutly Catholic schoolgirl of my generation—dreamed of becoming a missionary nun. Her large family lived in a small apartment. The parents' marriage was unhappy, but they were too poor or too conventional to separate. Catherine once glimpsed her mother and an admirer stealing a kiss, and she describes this memory pompously as a "primal scene." She and her mother shared a bed. Curled up on her side of it, the daughter masturbated resentfully and inexpertly—she says that she had not yet located her clitoris and wouldn't for a long while. Young girls often indulge in violent fantasizing even as they stopper their nascent lust with an excess of prudery. Catherine abandoned her reading of a Hemingway novel when she discovered that the heroine has multiple lovers, and she reacted with hostility to an atypical confidence from her mother, who casually remarked one day that she had slept with seven men. It was more intolerable, though quite natural, for Catherine to imagine that her parents might picture *her* in a man's arms. She fled their house soon after she was deflowered—at eighteen ("not particularly early," as she notes). While she never tried to hide her subsequent, hard-driven promiscuity from friends or colleagues, she always concealed it from her mother and father. They are presumably now both safely dead.

Catherine did not become a missionary, or at least not the kind she had once imagined. For several decades, she has edited a journal called *Art Press*, curated exhibitions, and written art criticism. But, with boundless and in many respects conventional female application, she has also pursued her desire to be nailed for love. Last year, Millet published an ostentatiously obscene work of erotobabble in the form of a memoir about her "unreserved abandonment of the self to a way of life." "The Sexual Life of Catherine M." provoked a predictably heated dialectical response in the European media while selling some three hundred and fifty thousand copies in France alone, and it has just been translated—carelessly and in places incoherently—into English (Grove; $23).

Millet was born in 1948. Twenty years later, student revolutionaries mounted the barricades gaily chanting "*Merde au chagrin!*" They piously believed that desire sets one free, and many still do. Catherine M. thinks of herself as a "libertine" philosopher ("My backside is the other side of who I am"); as an evangelist of sexual liberation theology; as a "valiant warrior" waging a class struggle against the "gentrification" of her erotic life; and as a mystic searching for the "grail" of "fornicatory communion," though her more obvious goal seems to be inclusion in the record books for various Olympic feats of endurance and agility. Over the years (her chronology is vague), she has been what the French call a *partouzeuse*—an orgiast. Orgies, mostly of the gourmet, mate-swapping variety,

EDWARD SOREL

The orgy-loving author of "The Sexual Life of Catherine M." and her husband live in Paris, where she edits an art magazine.



have taken place in luxurious Parisian salons and specialized clubs for centuries, though they were particularly popular in the nineteen-seventies, when Millet was young. Within weeks of losing her virginity and running away from home, she discovered group sex, and her gymnastics in the garden and bedrooms of a borrowed villa outside Lyons with a band of contemporaries led to progressively more heterogeneous and less well-upholstered sessions of consensual gang-banging on benches in the Bois de Boulogne, on the games table of a louche swingers' club, on the corrugated-metal slats of a truck parked outside the Soviet Embassy, in the cabs of semis, under the stands at a soccer stadium, sitting up in a sauna, supine in the grotto of a mansion, in stairwells, offices, back seats, cemeteries, bathtubs, peep-show cubicles, a three-star restaurant, museum storerooms, and on the hoods of cars in parking lots on the outskirts of Paris, where throngs of frenzied anonymous strangers would, for hours at a go, serially or several at a time, take their pleasure in all of her willingly proffered orifices. "I was completely available," she writes (her favorite orgy being a bragfest), "at all times and in all places, without hesitation or regret . . . and with a totally clear conscience."

The "quality" of an experience, Catherine M. says, was unimportant to her. She preferred to keep the genteel preliminaries—coquetry, foreplay, drinks, a friendly hello—as brief as possible. She didn't mind, and even welcomed, filth, rudeness, haste, uncomeliness, and bumbling in her partners: "To fuck above and beyond any sense of disgust was not just a way of lowering oneself, it was, in a diametrically opposite move, to raise yourself above all prejudice." She prided herself, rather like a sled dog mushing through a blizzard with a vial of lifesaving vaccine, on never begging off, despite a raging migraine or an excruciating case of "the clap . . . the shared fate of those who fuck a lot." (It is striking, though, that Millet ignores that other shared fate of so many who fornicated as recklessly as she did without protection—death. There isn't a single reference to AIDS, not to mention what must have been intensely bothersome chronic cases of herpes and cystitis. One has to wonder if she hasn't exaggerated her exploits or possibly invented some of them. Anal intercourse with forty men in a night calls for an exceptionally hardy specimen.)

One also learns, toward the end of the memoir, though by then without surprise, that Millet first realized that she'd never had a proper orgasm when, in her late twenties or early thirties, alone in bed, she finally achieved one with the help of a "Japanese vibrating dildo." Though she alludes grandiloquently to her "vast plain of desire," few women would seem to have learned less about the geography of rapture from its exploration, or derived so little profit from its mining rights: "The teasing I have had for offering my body so easily but not knowing how to make money out of it!" Though Catherine yearned to be "a high-class prostitute"—"a Madame Claude girl"—or, even better, an icy tease like Belle de Jour, slumming in a seedy brothel, her short, slightly bowed legs, artless enthusiasm, and distaste for pillow talk disqualified her. But over the years she did collect, in addition to the dildo, a few tokens of gratitude: a designer bath towel, some costume jewelry, taxi fare, the odd hundred-franc handout, a contribution toward a Saint Laurent dress, and free dental work. Few careers in public service have been as selfless.

OUTCRY

Evening having arrived,
I rested on the monotonous grass
And savored
That perpetual desire,
Dark and flying outcry,
Which the light when it dies holds back.

—*Giuseppe Ungaretti*
(Translated, from the Italian, by Andrew Frisardi.)

Lust is a great and inexhaustible literary subject, but writing graphically about what excites one isn't literature. The same stupid things excite everybody. Pornography is a form of pidgin—a trading tongue without the deep wellspring of nuance that produces clarity. Millet's memoir was greeted abroad as "absolutely staggering" (*Le Monde*) and in some reviews here as a profound contribution to our knowledge of the senses. Italian television staged a debate between Millet and the archbishop of Como—a "courteous" encounter, she recalled in an interview. "He only made two critical observations: that my book was less philosophical than those of de Sade—I don't agree . . . and that he wouldn't like to be my husband."

"The Sexual Life of Catherine M." suggests, however, that the mental hymen of the reading public is a membrane capable of miraculous regeneration. Surely, works in which a tough French girl who will do "anything," and who has read too much Bataille, complacently flaunts her voracious appetite for violation in the name of free agency—aggressively seeking what men like to pretend women must be forced to beg for—aren't subversive anymore, despite the current fashion for them. The dreary films of Catherine Breillat, "Romance" and "Fat Girl," and the repulsively cynical "Baise-Moi," by Virginie Despentes and Coralie Trinh Thi, belong to the same genre as "The Sexual Life of Catherine M." It is also now almost fifty years since the distinguished essayist Dominique Aury published "Story of O" under the pseudonym Pauline Réage. Even then, the subject and the imagery were hardly original: the Sadean château; the mysterious, priapic confraternity; the female initiates—temple whores—who reverently acquiesce in the penances imposed by their priestly dominators. Inverted Mariolatry is a trope of the French erotic tradition, which endlessly retells the same story of defilement. She who is without sin is submerged by her Lord in a baptismal river of filth to emerge as She who is without shame. The author's gender gave authority to the novel's premise of absolute carnal surrender as an avenue to divine grace, and Aury was the first woman to write so frankly and unsentimentally about her fantasies of bondage. But what is most thrilling (rather than merely titillating) about "Story of O" is the tension between its radically explicit scenes of torture and fornication and the purity of the sentences that describe them. Aury's reticent virtuosity—her withholding—is the foil for O's abject self-abandon. If this weren't the case, her fable would be not the masterpiece that it is, but a clinical case study of masochism, author's and subject's, in the form of a mildly heretical, comically exalted, didactically perverse, and ultimately banal piece of French art porn, like the volume here under review.

Millet's chthonic vulgarity is a provocation. She poses as a combatively uncongenial woman who lives according to an old-fashioned, romantic code that abhors bourgeois prudence. Her asocial persona even wears a faint halo of autism: the idiot savant obsessed with repetition and feats of arithmetic (the first and least awful chapter of the book is called "Numbers"). Given her fascination with scorekeeping, detachment, and anonymity, her sexual ethos seems a little queer—in the style of the seventies—and one sometimes wonders if the narrator is not a woman but a gay female impersonator. Like the denizens of the old West Village trucks, piers, bathhouses, and bars, Catherine M. is addicted to the rush of novelty and controlled menace, to the thrill of sodomy in public places with faceless thugs, and to lightless back rooms full of ambiguous moans where the sudden flare of a match illuminates a grimace. She loves the morphological variety of male members and styles of penetration as much as if not more than coitus itself. She recognizes the rapport between lust and wanderlust, both of which simultaneously dissolve one's bearings and refresh one's keenness of sensation.

Yet the middle-aged swinger who narrates "The Sexual Life of Catherine M." is also a credentialled intellectual with a nice apartment, an impressive academic bibliography, and an athletic life

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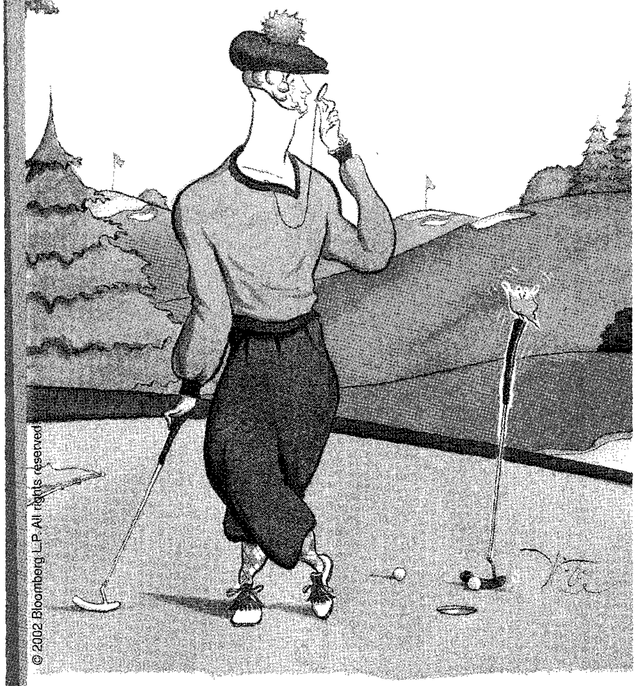
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of the mind. In the name of piety, many a puckish Renaissance painter tested the tolerance of his orthodox patrons with a flamboyant St. Sebastian or a slutty Eve, and Millet, the art historian, plays that game in reverse. In the name of authenticity, she challenges the black-garbed hierarchs of moral relativity to call her bluff. At least one of them did. "Can anyone still believe," Jean Baudrillard wrote in *Libération*, railing against reality TV and Millet's "exhibitionism," "that truth remains when its veil of secrecy is lifted?"

Lazy as most of Millet's prose is, it bears the pretentious imprint of her critical training. "I am a formalist," she announces. In ruminative asides, she wishes to impress us with her life's "antinomies": privacy and exposure; solitude and plurality; confinement and escape; propriety and transgression—the conflict between the vestal and the bawd who shape her character. "As far as I can see," she writes, "there is a balance to be sustained between the acquisition of moral and intellectual qualities which earns the respect of our peers, and a proportional excellence in practices which flout these qualities, brush them aside, and deny them." The most interesting paradox, however, is that Millet's spectacular hubris in telling this story under her own name is an act of self-mortification more hard-core than any in the text. She even seems to be courting, like her namesake, a kind of martyrdom. The pustulant public ridicule that she drains into a ladle and forces herself to swallow with such a show of humility must be particularly galling to a cultivated French palate.

Men and women suffer from grandiosity in different ways. Men tend toward fantasies of omnipotence, women of uniqueness. Millet wants her readers to ask themselves the question "How can she?" and one does. But perhaps her motive, hidden in plain sight, is prodigiously ordinary: to hold the interest of a man. She has, for thirty years, been a partner in an intimate union of two who share a bed, a bank account, vacations (they especially like "outdoor fucking"), squabbles, a workplace—a "couple culture," as she puts it—and who have for a decade been legally wed. Her husband is a novelist and amateur photographer named Jacques Henric. Though neither of them ever renounced "sleeping with lots of people," his affairs, Millet says, her voice trembling a little, like any betrayed woman's, filled her "with a terrible feeling of being supplanted," and Henric's possessiveness was just as volatile as that of any Latin lover. Was he the enraged brute who, as she slept, slashed her shoulder with a razor in "revenge" for "one of my unwisely detailed accounts"?

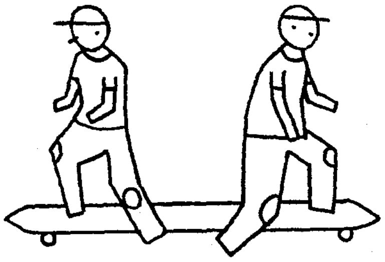
Henric published a companion volume to "The Sexual Life of Catherine M.," called "Légendes de Catherine M.," and its cover features the shapely naked "backside" of the young Millet. "A free woman," he writes, "without guilt, is a pretty gift for a novelist." The memoir of a sexual showoff, one might add, makes a pretty gift for a voyeur. The author's head shot of Henric shows a taurine man of about sixty-five, in a black leather biker's jacket. There are more photographs inside—mostly snaps from their holiday trips over the years—including several taken in Spain of Millet doggedly flashing her droopy little breasts, neat pubis, short legs, and "supple" waist at the grave of Walter Benjamin. They are accompanied by a flaccid text of such orgiastic fatuity that it seems like parody. Vaunting his own obscure novels and commingling his wretched blather about reality and appearances with the refined aperçus of poor Benjamin, who deserves to rest in peace, Henric proceeds to drop more august names in a few pages (Rimbaud, Joyce, Baudelaire, Artaud, Genet, Kafka, Proust, Céline, Lacan, and the indispensable Bataille) than there are drunks in a phone booth. The tone of his voice eerily recalls that of the only other French erotomane who is as tedious to read: Colette's first husband, Willy.

Colette would probably have slept with Henric to teach him a lesson while dismissing Millet as one of those women whom she calls "a Madame How-many-times." She might also have chastised her familiarly with the same smart slap that she gave to her friend Radclyffe Hall, who had asked for a critique of "The Well of Loneliness": "Obscenity is such a narrow domain. One immediately begins to suffocate there, and to feel bored." ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

Tuxedo Park, *by Jennet Conant (Simon & Schuster; $26).* In the prewar years, Alfred Lee Loomis was one of the most powerful men on Wall Street. But he was also a crucial, if heretofore unsung, figure in the evolution of experimental physics in America. In this brisk, entertaining biography, Loomis emerges as "the last of the great amateurs," a gentleman scientist in the mold of Benjamin Franklin, with a quintessentially American interest in practical, rather than merely theoretical, work. Both patron and player, he turned his massive Tuxedo Park home into a kind of Yaddo for scientists, while also helping to develop a host of inventions, including the atom-smashing cyclotron. Once the Second World War began, he became a central figure, along with his friends Vannevar Bush and Ernest Lawrence, in the orchestration of American science's contribution to the war effort. Conant shows how Loomis, as the head of the M.I.T. Radiation Laboratory, dexterously governed "a scientific republic" of physicists who ended up making major contributions to anti-submarine warfare, radar, and the accuracy of night bombing. Her group portrait offers a healthy reminder of how much good science depends on community and collaboration, not solitary genius.

The Affirmative Action Empire, *by Terry Martin (Cornell; $27.50).* In the popular imagination, the Soviet Union was always synonymous with Russia, but in the U.S.S.R.'s early days Soviet leaders had a very different idea in mind: they wanted to establish a true multinational, multiethnic empire. To that end, they attacked Russian nationalism as a vestige of Tsarism, and instituted a set of policies that looked very much like affirmative action, enforcing the use of local languages and fostering the development of ethnic leaders, even at the cost of discriminating against Russians. Yet, as Martin shows in this fascinating history, simply giving an order was not enough, even in the Stalin years, and the complex relationship between socialism and nationalism in places like Ukraine often frustrated Soviet intentions. More important, ethnicity, once fostered, was frequently a counterweight to, rather than a bulwark of, Communist ideology; although Stalin remained rhetorically committed to the multi-state idea, he ended up terrorizing those ethnic leaders he saw as threats.



The Seal Wife, *by Kathryn Harrison (Random House; $23.95).* In previous books, Harrison has leaned toward the lurid—incest, the Spanish Inquisition, Chinese foot-binding—but here she offers a more muted tale, set in Alaska in the early nineteen-hundreds. A lonely meteorologist named Bigelow yearns for female companionship, and it comes in slippery forms: a silent Aleut who skins animals before sex; a chatty prostitute who obligingly wears a gag during intercourse; a shopkeeper's daughter who stammers so violently that she communicates only through written notes. For all the eccentricity of its characters, however, the story remains inert; Harrison seems less interested in Bigelow's torment than in her own thoughts on the unpredictability of desire.

Waterborne, *by Linda Gregerson. (Houghton Mifflin; $23).* Accomplishments abound in Gregerson's elegant third collection of poems, which is clearly informed by her work as a Renaissance scholar. Intimate conversations are made worldly, peppered with parentheticals and interrupted by other voices. A poem on her father's death is set against lines from Luke 12 and her father's own retelling of a Depression-era Red Cross drive; the poem becomes an elegy completed by acts of faith and charity. Gregerson's rich aesthetic allows her best poems to resonate metaphysically, offering a way to live both now and in history: "the past / that has a place for us will know us by / our scattered / wake."

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POP MUSIC

THINGS HOLD TOGETHER

Wilco's Jeff Tweedy dyes his roots.

BY JAMES SUROWIECKI

In the early nineteen-nineties, Jeff Tweedy's voice was a fixture on the soundtrack I carried around in my head. Uncle Tupelo, the band Tweedy had started with his friend Jay Farrar, was something genuinely new, blending the rhythms and storytelling of traditional country with the mood and volume of punk, and evoking an imaginary America where the Carter Family, D. Boon, and J Mascis sat around a room making music together. The band's sound seemed so distinctive, in fact, that it sparked a musical movement called alt.country, whose fans fetishized steel guitars and acoustic songs about hard living and hard drinking. But I didn't really care about the banjos and Dobros. Mostly, I liked the way Tweedy's voice sounded—tense, raspy, simultaneously knowing and innocent, as if he expected nothing and everything from the world. His songs frayed at the edges instead of wrapping themselves up into neat packages. They were never corny, but they somehow radiated bleak optimism. They reminded me of that line from the Minutemen: "I live sweat, but I dream light-years."

Not everyone felt this way. At the time, the consensus was that Tweedy, though talented, was the lesser of the band's two songwriters, a poppier understudy to the visionary Farrar, who, even as a young man, had an air of solemn authority about him. So when Uncle Tupelo broke up, in 1994, most people expected wonderful things from Farrar, and he didn't disappoint. He started a band called Son Volt and put out the highly regarded "Trace." Tweedy, who formed a band called Wilco, seemed to have a less certain future without his partner. Wilco's first record, "A.M." (1995), was middling, but its second, "Being There" (1996), was one of the great records of the decade, a glorious shambling mess that made it clear that Tweedy was no one's understudy.

"Being There" was all over the place, as if Tweedy had pulled out his entire record collection and pillaged from the Stones, the Flying Burrito Brothers, John Lennon, the Replacements. But whatever he stole he improved on. The album was clearly grounded in a quintessentially American musical tradition, but it refused to follow alt.country conventions. In songs like "Misunderstood" and "Sunken Treasure," long power ballads that fused simple chord structures with found noise, atonal guitars, and vocal overdubs, Tweedy—with the help of a studio-savvy new collaborator, Jay Bennett—used mixing-board effects to make his songs more, not less, emotionally intense, and in the process demolished the idea that the only guarantee of authenticity was an acoustic guitar. "Being There" was a critical success, and when Wilco followed it with "Mermaid Avenue" (1998)—a collection of Woody Guthrie lyrics that the band set to music and recorded with the British folkie Billy Bragg—Tweedy earned comparisons to Neil Young and Bruce Springsteen.

Despite the acclaim, Tweedy found the legacy of Uncle Tupelo hard to escape. Alt.country fans saw him as an apostate, in contrast to Farrar, whose post-Uncle Tupelo work was single-mindedly countrified. And yet, instead of just writing Tweedy off, the alt.countryites continued to follow obsessively his every move. Perhaps as a result, Tweedy seemed anxious to sever himself from the past—"the stuff behind us, pulling at us," he called it. He did so, definitively, when he released Wilco's fourth album, "Summer Teeth" (1999).

"Summer Teeth" was pure pop lushness, with Wall of Sound production, bright melodies and background vocals, and elaborate orchestration. There was nothing alt.country about it. Unfortunately, there was almost nothing that was emotionally resonant about it, either. Instead of invigorating the songs, the high-gloss production sucked the air out of them, making the record feel cluttered and decorative.

The bizarre thing about this was that Tweedy had written lyrics for a very different album, a brutal portrait of the fatigue, emotional violence, and anomie that can arise in a relationship, only to bury them beneath studio frippery. (Tellingly, the record's two great songs, "She's a Jar" and "Via Chicago," were also its bleakest.) Some critics praised the juxtaposition of dark lyrics with airhead tunes as "delicious irony," and a "bold move" that created "relentless tension." But it was just a gimmick—how often do you want to hear backup singers blissfully intoning "Your prayers will never be answered again"?—and it felt as if Tweedy had flinched in the face of his own work. In trying to free himself from other people's expectations, he seemed to have forgotten his own.

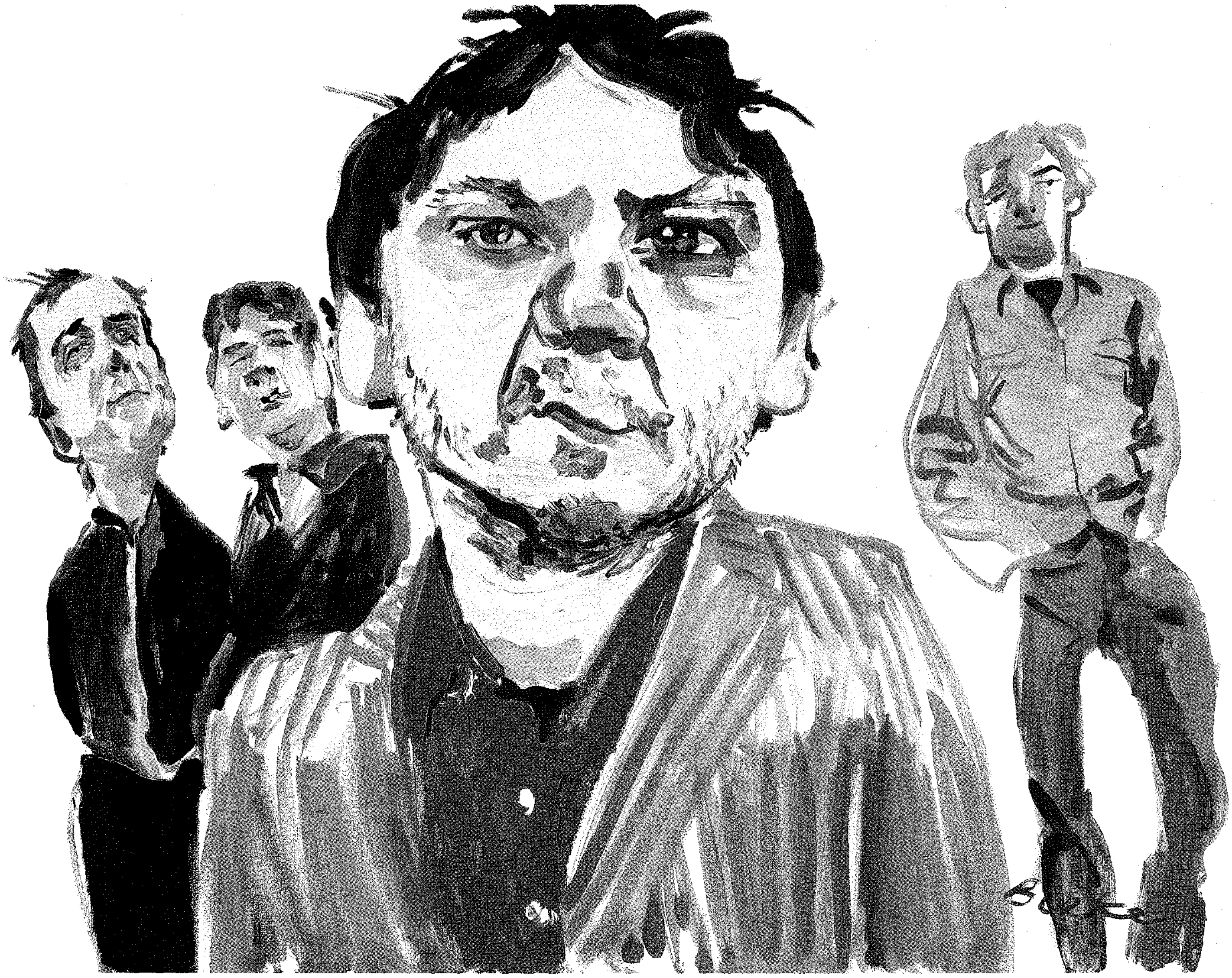
No longer, though. It took almost three years and a tortuous pas de deux with Wilco's former record label (which didn't like the direction the band was taking), but the group's new album, "Yankee Hotel Foxtrot," is out, and it is spectacular. It keeps faith with Tweedy's songwriting roots while insisting on a deeper and richer sonic environment. His virtuosity is on full display here—the band moves effortlessly from dirges to rave-ups to power ballads. But the facile effervescence of "Summer Teeth" has been left behind. On "Yankee Hotel," the virtuosity is at the service of music and words that are as strong as anything Tweedy has ever written.

The songs mostly have traditional pop or folk structures, but they're embedded in tape loops, strange percussion, and discordance. In the first thirty seconds of "I Am Trying to Break Your Heart," you hear organs, a xylophone, and what sounds like an alarm clock. "Ashes of American Flags" seems almost willfully unstructured, and culminates in a hurricane of guitar, organ, and untuned piano, while "Jesus, etc." opens with eerie strings, and "Reservations," the love song that closes the album, fades out into three minutes of minimal soundscape. It would be a mistake to dismiss this as Tweedy just trying to be "experimental." The weirdness isn't superfluous to the songs. It's integral, clearing out space for them, throwing the melodies—and Tweedy's voice—into sharp relief. Despite (or because of) all the noise, the songs feel spare, broken down, until only the stuff that matters is left, as if Tweedy is trying to speak, and play, to the heart of things.

He's not straightforward about it, though, and he's adept at manipulating simple tricks to great effect. He misrhymes. He uses junior-high surrealism. He garbles his vocals just enough so that you know what he's saying, but only after a half second of bewilderment. (On "Jesus, etc.," he sings "our love" so it sounds more like "aw-la.") These things aren't showy, but they work on the back of your mind. Glenn Kotche's drumming, which is exceptional, jagged and sometimes arrhythmic, also disrupts your expectations, with beats that are just a bit off from what you're anticipating. It gives you an unsettling feeling, even in the middle of a bouncy song like "Kamera," of things being not quite all right. (Tweedy and Jay Bennett parted company after completing the album.)

But "Yankee Hotel" is more about things holding together than about things falling apart. The sonic chaos heightens the sense of order that's embodied by the melodies and, ultimately, by Tweedy's voice. It's a tenuous order—"Phone my family, tell them I'm lost on the sidewalk," Tweedy sings—but a real one, at least for now. Toward the end of "Ashes of American Flags," the music dies down, and over a muted organ you can still hear the hollow, mesmerizing guitar riff that has echoed through the song, sounding now as if it's coming from very far away, and then a chord from a piano, just before Tweedy's voice, weary but still in the game, comes in: "I would like to salute / the ashes of American flags / and all the falling leaves / filling up shopping bags." Wouldn't we all?

Tweedy isn't saying anything especially complicated here. We stay distant from those we love, but we still love them; we cling to dreams of a place that might be purer than the place where we live; we want to save our friends; we miss being young. These are things that we know and understand. But on "Yankee Hotel Foxtrot" Tweedy says them in a way that makes them sound new. ♦



The sonic weirdness on Wilco's new album, "Yankee Hotel Foxtrot," throws into sharp relief both the melodies and Tweedy's voice.

PHILIP BURKE

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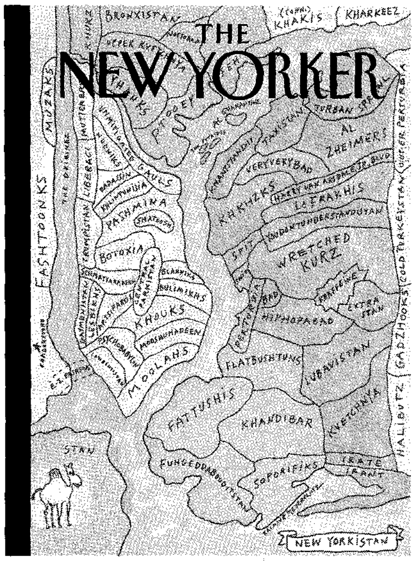

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THE THEATRE

BABY HUNGER

Tom Donaghy on not so gay parenting.

BY JOHN LAHR

Plays can be time bombs that keep exploding in the brain long after the curtain falls. Take Tom Donaghy's sprightly "Boys and Girls" (at the Duke). The title of the play suggests a certain childishness in its characters, and its introductory music—a high-pitched kids' version of "All You Need Is Love"—seconds the motion. The play's short strokes of dialogue and characterization give it a sketchy quality; it is more Ping-Pong than tennis. But Donaghy, a former student of David Mamet's, learned from the Master that "you could do more damage with fewer words," and we are lured, by this surface brightness and by Gerald Gutierrez's deft direction, into a gray world of complication and ambiguity—that of the gender wars, and the subsidiary skirmish over the combustible issue of gay parenting. Under the rumblings of baby hunger in "Boys and Girls," there can be heard a distinctively American—and adolescent—ambition: to have everything all the time.

The play's hero, the lovelorn, nervy, aptly named Reed (Robert Sella)—he bends every which way in the sexuality sweepstakes—still has a jones for Jason (Malcolm Gets), an alcoholic boyfriend he kicked out some months ago. They meet up at a local bar on his birthday, and one of the many faltering admissions they make, in the static of Donaghy's carefully wrought exchange, concerns their longing to rear a child together—a project that would jump-start internal change in both men, bind them to each other, and build hope into an otherwise bleak emotional landscape. "Someone to raise better than we were," Reed says. "For our, um, extra love." The birthday celebration then moves to his friend Bev's grand new duplex, where she lives with her Sugar Mommy, the pert, well-organized, and possessive Shelly (Carrie Preston). Reed and Bev (Nadia Dajani) once had a roll in the hay, and he donated his sperm for her—although his was not the sperm used to create Georgie, the four-year-old boy whom Bev and Shelly are rearing now. In the middle of the party's bourgeois flimflammery ("There's a sconce I wanted to show you"), Bev pops an unexpected question to Reed. "We want you to live with us," she says. "He needs a father."

So when Reed reunites with Jason, who is not only back in his life but back on the sauce, he is caught on a kind of sexual seesaw, bouncing between male model and role model, between caring for a big baby and caring for a little one. In the play, Georgie is always, significantly, offstage. The legalities of sharing the child take on more importance than the actual sharing of time with him, and the problem of being present for Georgie is Reed's undoing in the new ménage; when Reed goes away on business, a second gay babysitter, Jeurgen, is hired to pick up the slack. "Then who am I?" Reed asks, feeling marginalized. "We know who you are," Bev counters. "Georgie knows. You're the guy who's always in Boston."

Act II opens with Reed slumped in a folding chair amid sand buckets and beach bags. He casts a cold eye offstage at Georgie and at Jeurgen, with whom he's had a fling, and who has turned out to be a foot fetishist. "God forbid I should get kissed every now and then," Reed bitches to Bev. "I mean, whatever happened to tonguing. It's like I'm at this especially ardent podiatrist's." Reed's venting serves as a

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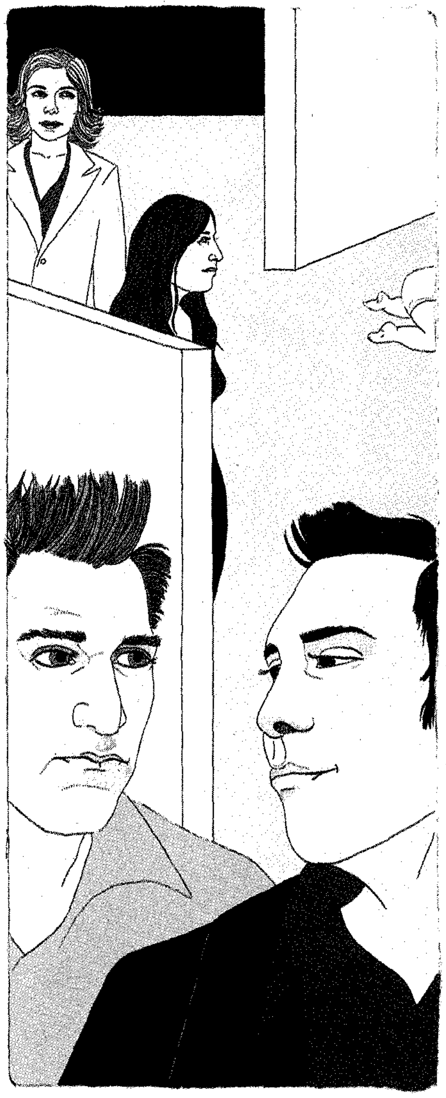
barometer of both his immaturity and his frustration. "I will not complain," he tells Shelly. "It's your life it's your child it's your money it's your home I am just some fag in a room." Shelly throws a drink in his face, he insults her, and in the catfight that follows—the play's best moment—she wallops the bejeezus out of him. But it's a battle



Four characters and a baby: picking sides in the gender wars in "Boys and Girls."

LARA TOMLIN

that nobody wins. Reed loses his newfound home, Shelly loses her lover and the child, and the most important figure in the play's debate—Georgie—loses any hope of continuity.

As a divorced heterosexual man who was reared by a black nanny and has been a single parent, I am convinced that consistency, not gender, is the key to parenting; it is what allows the child to form strong attachments to the world and to grow secure in himself. This play ends with Georgie still invisible to us and to the characters, who have found yet another alignment. Jason is off to France with a wealthy lover with whom he hopes to adopt a child, and, as the curtain falls, Reed and Bev stare at each other nervously across the pillows of a pull-out bed. "What's gonna happen?" Bev asks. Reed replies, "When it comes to things like this . . . I'm not sure." Of course, no one is ever sure. Donaghy seems to want to leave the audience with what the script calls "measured hope," but his schematic play is all the better for the shock of its politically incorrect fallout. Whether or not he realizes it, his tale, with its shifting partnerships and hasty parental alliances, turns out to be a cautionary one.

The legendary English music-hall comedian Max Wall used to have an overenthusiastic accompanist who tried to upstage him with his piano playing. Wall would fix the guy with a hatchet glare, before turning to the audience. "While he's playing, I'm decaying," he'd say. The joke rang through my head like an epigraph to the ninety minutes of murk prophetically titled "This Thing of Darkness" (at the Atlantic Theatre Company), an inept attempt by Craig Lucas and David Schulner to let their minds and their soi-disant characters wander from the present to twenty-five and fifty years hence. In all good faith, without rereading the play, which I refuse to do, I can't tell you what happens. Here, sometimes with the characters quite literally in the dark, the authors chew the cud of *Existenz*—trying to digest mortality, change, failed potential, friendship, love, the passing of time, and, unless I'm a Dutchman and the gigantic explosion that singes the faces of the oldsters toward the end is a red herring, some kind of nuclear incident. The Actor Protection Program prevents me from naming the performers who inhabit this lifeless allegory, which Craig Lucas directs in a style as lethargic as that in which he wrote it. Only someone who has been living on grants and surviving too long in not-for-profit institutions could be so indifferent to the public. What is unconscionable about this lamentable evening is that, in pondering the nature of Time, the authors waste ours. ♦

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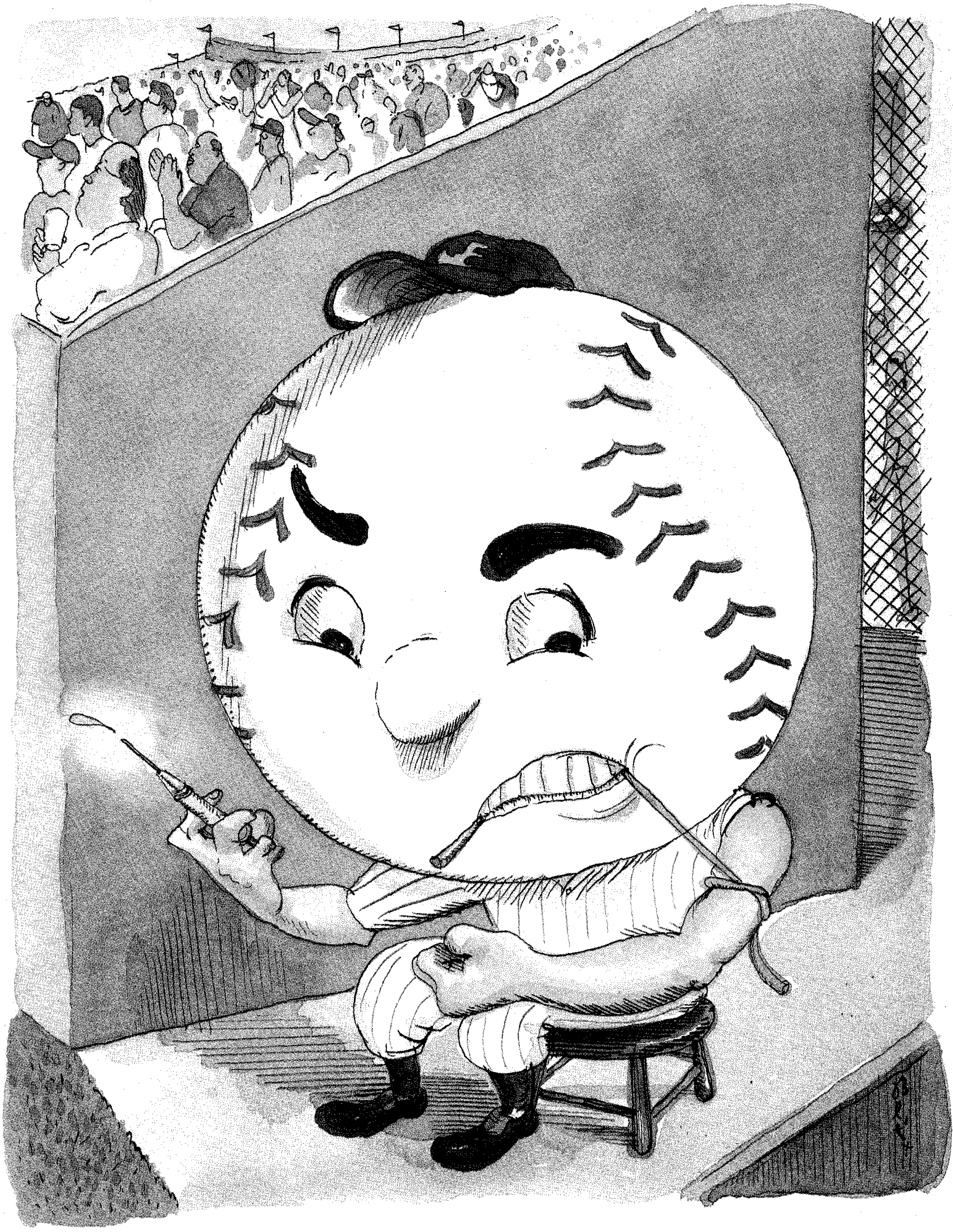

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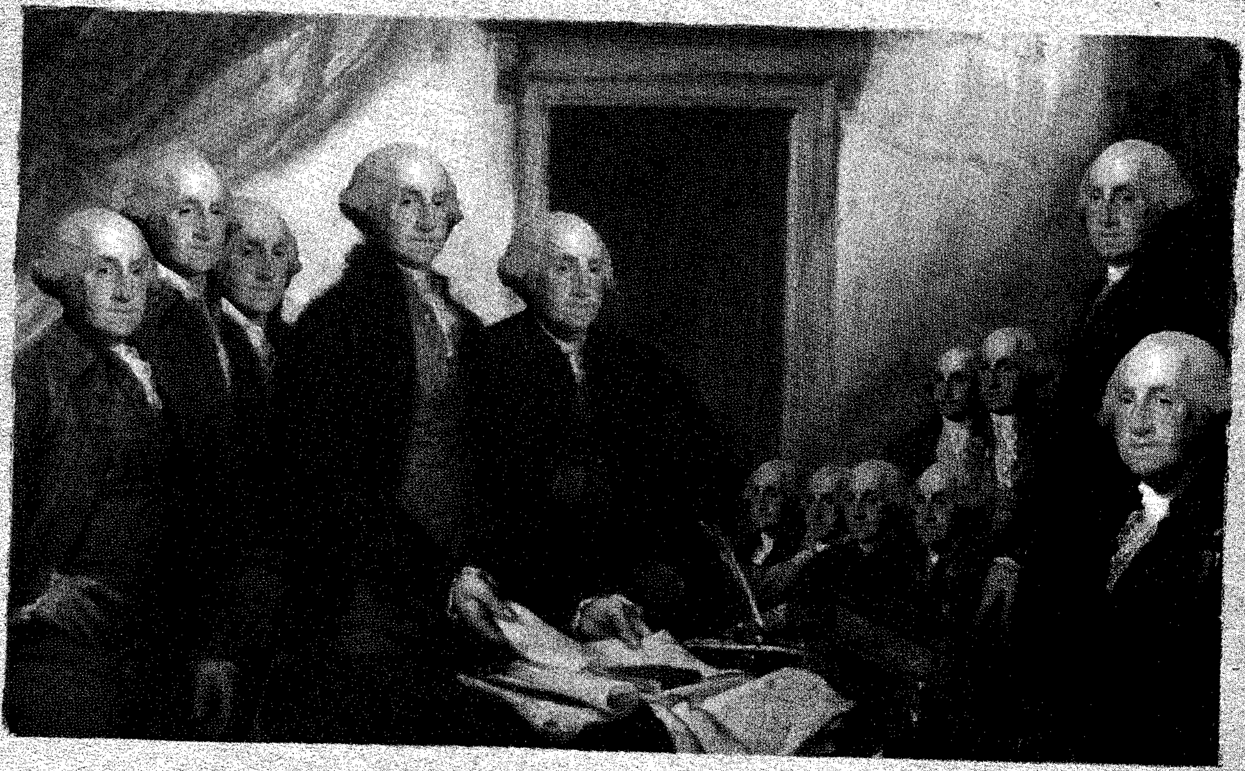

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